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JOHN BULL

Vol. XXXII. No. 863. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1922. TWOPENCE.

John Bull's £3000 XMAS OFFER

(SEE PAGE 4)

Edited by CHARLES PILLEY

How to Back Winners by an EX-HANDICAPPER

THE FIRES OF REVOLT

by "A Gentleman with a Duster"

Make yourself a 'Black Cat' Costume

Free for 50 Coupons

It need cost you nothing. Persuade your male friends to save the coupons from Black Cat Cigarettes—the very best value for money.

All the material required together with full instructions for making up, sent post free. Send coupons to

BLACK CAT CIGARETTE CO. (Dept. 8), 238, City Road, E.C.

Black Cat

VIRGINIA CIGARETTES

10 for 6D.

D.9

102 more claims paid

FIRE.

SUSSEX.—S. S. SHAW, 34, Goldstone Road, Hove.
NORWICH.—S. DANIELS, 57, Chamberlain Road, Angle Town.
WOLVERHAMPTON.—H. TAYLOR, 76, St. Matthews Street, off Willenhall Road.
BURTON-ON-TRENT.—R. G. ALGER, 68, Bearwood Hill Road.
S.E. 1.—Mrs. WRIGHT, 39, Ralph Street, Boro'.
S. DEVON.—E. A. WOOD, Sefton House, The Green, Shaldon.
LOWER CLAPTON.—Mrs. L. SMITH, 143, Mildenhall Road.
DURHAM.—D. JONES, 4, Green Terrace, Seaton Carew.
SOUTH LOWESTOFT.—S. W. JONES, 75, London Road.
SOUTH TOTTENHAM.—J. E. MILNES, 73, Antill Road.
LIVERPOOL.—J. RATHERBY, 67, Lever Street, Kirkdale.
FIFESHIRE.—J. BAGNALL, Pitmedden Wynd, Auchtermuchty.
TIDWORTH.—Sergt. (Q.M.) J. SCOTT, Division Office, R.E.
LINCS.—J. H. BARNABY, 9, Peakes Field Avenue, Grimsby.
ABERDEEN.—W. KENNEDY, 36, Union Terrace.
HANTS.—E. G. PITT, Coach Hill, Titchfield, Fareham.
NORFOLK.—B. P. BULL, Rose Cottage, Pentney, King's Lynn.
STOURPORT.—W. WILLIAMS, 9, Baldwin Road.
S.E.24.—A. WHEELER, 357, Shakespeare Road, Herne Hill.
SHEFFIELD.—S. BARNSLEY, 293, Staniforth Road, Attercliffe.
Nr. PAIGNTON.—J. CARTER, Compton, Marldon.

STORM.

HERNE HILL, S.E.—T. BUTLER, 127, Norwood Road.

BURST HOT WATER PIPE.

MANCHESTER.—C. GRADWELL, 51, Beresford Street, Moss Side.
CHESHIRE.—W. REYNOR, 50, Hallville Road, Seacombe.

GAS EXPLOSION.

COLWYN BAY.—G. H. JONES, "Briarside," York Road.

ACCIDENT BENEFITS (£3 per week)

E. 1.—D. COHEN, 72, Christian Street, Commercial Road.
SURREY.—M. FRANKLING 64, Cleaveland Road, Surbiton.
PLYMOUTH.—A. ELMES, 54, Emma Place, Stonehouse.
BRISTOL.—E. H. SPILLER, 44, Ash Road, Horfield.

ACCIDENT BENEFITS. (£1 per week)

LIVERPOOL.—A. M. PHILLIPS, 26, Barndale Road, Mossley Hill.
BRIGHTON.—A. M. PEARCE, 3, Upper Hamilton Road.
CANVEY-ON-SEA.—E. GOSLING, Pankattan, Foster Park.
FIFE.—Mrs. A. LOWRIE, 10, Simpson Square, Buckhaven.
NOTTINGHAM.—F. W. STEPHENSON, 11, Churchill Street, Old Lenton.
WEST LOTHIAN.—J. THORNTON, Whitburn.
HANTS.—J. L. BIGGS, 52, King Street, Southsea.
STAFFS.—T. H. CLEWES, 214, Oldbury Road, Smethwick.
SUFFOLK.—E. E. STANNARD, 29, Victoria Street, Southwold.
YNYSYBWL.—E. ROBERTS, 6, Geely Road.
LARKHILL.—J. HIGGINSON, 114, McNeill Street.
SHEFFIELD.—G. W. COLDRON, 782, Grimesthorpe Road.
HENLEY-ON-THAMES.—L. ROE, 6, Caxton Street.
WILLESDEN.—M. PAYNE, 51, Waldo Road, College Park.
BARRY.—E. T. MORGAN, 36, High Street.
CHESHIRE.—J. KINEALY, 136, Wheatland Lane, Wallasey.
GLASGOW.—A. SUTHERLAND, 256, Crown Street.
SALFORD.—M. YATES, 112, West Worsely Street.
BENTLEY.—R. YATES, 26, Rostholme Square.
HEYWOOD.—M. A. MAUGHAM, 7 Bk. Bury Street.
N.7.—A. E. WAKEHAM, 23, Corinth Road, North Road.
SPALDING.—G. WYLES, Northgate Road, Pinchbeck.
BROMWICH (West).—A. W. SAVAGE, 107, Bromford Lane.
NOTTS.—R. SMITH, Coombe Cottage, Farnsfield, Southwell.
NOTTS.—H. LAMBERT, 11, Seymour Street, Carlton Road.
SUNDERLAND.—C. HALLIWELL, 9, St. Leonard Street.
DEVON.—J. POOK, Harts Close, Broad Clyst, Nr. Exeter.
LANCASHIRE.—R. MYERS, 28, Beach Street, Askam-in-Furness.
WOLVERHAMPTON.—A. STINTON, 12, Lime Road, Tettenhall.
WIMBLEDON.—C. CHESTER, 10A, South Road.
SHEFFIELD.—M. GREEN, 587, Carlisle Street, East.
WALSALL.—A. HOGAN, 4, Paddock Terrace, Paddock Lane.
MANCHESTER.—E. HODGKINSON, 60, Sussex Street, Lr. Broughton, Salford.
PLYMOUTH.—F. E. TREGGER, 11, Sunnyside Road, Embankment Road
YNYSYBWL.—M. CHATER, 34, Paget Street.
ISLINGTON.—E. COMETTI, 79, Mildmay Grove.
ABERDARE.—Mrs. G. GIBBS, 10, Broncynon Terrace, Cwmdare.
NOTTS.—A. DAVIES, 140, Kilton Road, Worksop.
BERKS.—R. E. PAYTON, "Hill View," Spencers Road, Nr. Reading.
DONCASTER.—M. E. BARLOW, 123, Urban Road.
ESSEX.—L. G. ELLINGFORD, Ambleside, Vange, Nr. Pitsea.
STAFFORDSHIRE.—G. HOPLEY, 23, New Cross Street, Tipton.
EDINBURGH.—G. B. MUNRO, 74, Argyle Park Terrace.
SCOTLAND.—Mrs. HARVEY, 6, Leslie Street, Motherwell.
CO. DURHAM.—E. E. SANDISON, 34, Grosvenor Street, Gateshead.
MON.—J. HOPKINS, 82, Charles Street, Abertysswg.
ESSEX.—E. HYLES, Nettleswell Cross, Harlow.
Nr. WOKINGHAM.—W. MULFORD, Finchampstead.
S.W. 1.—E. LEVEINE, 61, Lupus Street, Pimlico.
LOUGHBOROUGH.—J. RIPPON, 51, Bridge Street, Barrow-on-Soar.
S. DEVON.—A. M. MANN, 13, Ashleigh Terrace, Paignton.
CLAPHAM.—W. C. JEWELL, Shandon House.
WOODBRIDGE.—E. W. STEPHENSON, 53, Thoro'fare.
MANCHESTER.—T. HOLLAND, 229a, Oxford Road.
N. 22.—H. GORE, 191, Whittington Road, Bowes Park.
PORT TALBOT.—J. LEWIS, 75, Railway Crescent, Cymmer.
MIDDLESEX.—G. MORRIS, Bath Road, Harlington.
ULSTER.—M. A. NASH, Antrim Road, Lisburn.
CAMBRIDGE.—L. PASSANT, 18, Stanley Road.
KENT.—W. FULLER, 9 Lavender Hill, Tonbridge.
KENT.—R. E. STAVELEY, 44, Dickson Road.
S.E. 1.—A. KINGSTON, 137, Scovell Road.
IRELAND.—J. HENNEBERG, Parkgariffe Cotts., Co. Cork.
Nr. ROMFORD.—A. E. GARDNER, 4, Briar Cottage, Collier Row.
GT. YARMOUTH.—L. EDWARDS, 49, York Road.
S. S. GLASGOW.—Miss McSWINEY, 114, Sandyfaulds Street.
BEWDLEY.—W. H. GRUBB, Shatterford.
WEYMOUTH.—H. JANAWAY, 2, Trinity Cotts., Chapelhay.
ARBROATH.—M. CARRIE, 27, Fergus Square.
CHICHESTER.—L. M. RYE, Stone Walls, Bosham.
NORFOLK.—W. COLE, Wood Hall [illegible], Hilary.
Nr. COLESHILL.—S. GUNTRIP, Rose Tree Cottage, Marstock Lane, Shustoke.
S. WALES.—T. J. WILLIAMS, 4, Cwmeldeg Cotts., Nr. Pontypridd.
ST. HELENS.—J. HUNTER, 41, Langtree Street, Parr.

Forms on page 26. Sign Now!

THE MENACE OF FIRE

Have you thought of the risk you run?

NOW winter is here again, in every home in the land cheerful fires spread their cosy glow and inviting warmth as the dull evenings draw in, and Home takes on a special significance to every Englishman and Englishwoman.

In castle and cottage there is warmth and comfort, as, the day's work done, the family sits round the leaping flames in the soft glow of the lamps; there is pride and satisfaction of achievement when out of endeavour and ambition a concrete home has taken shape, and a man is establishel there, king of his own castle, ruling his willing subjects, who obey because they love him.

It is a pleasant picture.

But—there is another.

Think!

A clamorous bell shatters the silence of the night. There is a roar of voices and a deafening clamour as the fire engines sweep up.

Fire!

Ah! now the word has a different sound. Now the meek servant has become a terrible master. Now the leaping flames no longer spell comfort and warmth; no longer are their flickerings cosy and inviting.

They crackle and roar with demoniac laughter as they destroy in a few moments the labour of a lifetime. And presently, when the fire engines have gone, there remains only a heap of black and smouldering ashes of what was once a home. Gone in a few moments the cherished trifles that made up the intimate atmosphere, gone all the things that had been painfully acquired with years of effort.

Think!

It might happen to you.

It might be *your* home.

It could happen so easily. A carelessly thrown match, a fallen cinder, an overturned lamp—and then—

Fire!

But—there is yet a third picture.

A registered reader of *John Bull*, a claim for damage by fire, and a cheque in prompt settlement up to £[illegible].

That at least is something. *John Bull* could not restore the home; but it could help to make good the damage. *It could lay the foundations of a new home.*

And it was able to do this because the reader had the foresight to become a *registered* reader and cover his risks by taking advantage of the *John Bull* Free Insurance Scheme.

The registered reader of *John Bull* gets a newspaper that is admitted on all hands to be the finest value for twopence obtainable.

In addition to this, he gets a free Insurance Policy, which covers him against the risk of accident and fire.

This cover is guaranteed, not as in the usual way in Free Insurance Schemes by some outside Insurance Company, *but by John Bull itself*; and behind *John Bull* is Odhams Press Ltd., with an issued capital of £1,250,000

If you are not already a registered reader of *John Bull*

Think!

It's worth thinking about! Fill in the forms on page —

MEN WHO MAKE GOOD

A chat with our Subscription Representatives

WE want first of all to say, "Well done!" to the ever-increasing number of you who have made good.

It has been a great pleasure to publish in JOHN BULL week by week the splendid records some of you have achieved, but we want to include now all those—spare-time workers as well as whole-time workers—who have worked with such a will to make the scheme a success. Well done!

• • •

Keep up the good work! We would like to see some splendid results between now and Christmas. It is the time of year when any little extra commissions will be doubly welcome.

Have you a definite aim each week? Do you go "all out" to obtain a certain number of registrations? A definite goal in view will keep you keyed up to the highest pitch of efficiency.

Keep it up!

• • •

Another matter we want to touch upon can be summed up in the one word "method."

It is most important that all representatives should adhere to the proper working of the scheme.

Fortunately we have in JOHN BULL representatives an earnest band of workers who are quick to report any irregularities to us so that we may take steps to rectify them.

It will avoid delay in the payments of commissions and bonuses to Subscription Representatives, and also avoid much unnecessary work and trouble, if the following points are observed :—

(1) All Order Forms must be signed by the new Registered Reader in the space provided, and NOT by the Subscription Representative.

(2) All Registration Forms must be signed by the new Registered Reader, and also signed by his or her regular newsagent. The Subscription Representative should NOT on any account sign in the place of either.

(3) It should be made perfectly clear to the new Registered Reader that JOHN BULL is to be purchased for a minimum of 13 weeks. Payments are made to Subscription Representatives only on the understanding that JOHN BULL is purchased for the full period stated on the Order Form, and that the conditions laid down are strictly complied with

• • •

Some of you have thanked us for paying your commissions and bonuses so promptly. We are naturally pleased at the smooth way our system of payment is working, and this reminds us of another kind of prompt payment we are making—namely, the prompt payment of all *claims*. Letters continue to pour in complimenting us on this score.

• • •

Here are the Efficiency Prize Winners for the week ending Tuesday, November 28th :—First prize, £3, Mr. P. Owen, 29, Walker Street, Warrington; second prize, £2, Mr. J. Sweeney, 560, Gt. Cheetham Street, E., Higher Broughton, Manchester; third prize, £1, Mr. A. R. Winder, 15, Centre Street, S. Elmsall, nr. Pontefract.

• • •

P.S.—Don't fail to read the List of Claims on this page. Those paid in your locality make the best argument you can use to persuade others in the vicinity to register.

SMALL ADS. WORTH WATCHING

PREPAID RATE: 8s. PER LINE, AVERAGING 6 WORDS.
MINIMUM CHARGE, 24s.
Address: The Advertisement Manager "JOHN BULL," 57-59, Long Acre, London, W.C.2

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MONEY MAKING Bargains for Shopkeepers and Beginners. — Sell manufacturers' clearing lines and travellers' samples in General Drapery much below ordinary price. Big profit certain. Wholesale Catalogue free. — Wolfson's Warehouse, 9, High-street, Manchester.

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DRAPERY REMNANTS (wholesale), Reduced Price. 20-page Price List free, full of Bargains in General Drapery, Fents, Blouses, Overalls, Hosiery, etc. Try a £1 or £2 Blouse Length Parcel for large profits.—HARRY H. CLEGG (Dept. L.), 96, High Street, Manchester. (The English Firm.)

DRAPERY, Remnants, Readymades, Up-to-date Stock. Drapers, Shopkeepers and Market Sellers supplied. Parcels from 6/-, Bales from £2 10/-. Free Catlg. Sound advice for beginners. Wholesale only. Carr. pd. and discount on orders value £5 and upwards. The British Firm. Est. 30 years.—F. Andrew & Co. (Dept. 15), 30, George Street, Manchester.

AGENTS WANTED.

ADD to your weekly earnings by selling in spare time, Boots, Clothing, Household Drapery, Lino, Carpets, etc. Cash or easy terms. Highest commission. Liberal supply of samples. Men in regular work apply to Freemans, Contractors H.M. Govt., Lavender Hill, London.

SITUATIONS VACANT.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE has vacancies for armourers, acetylene welders, clerks (general and stores accounting), fitters, cooks and butchers, drivers (petrol, winch and stationary oil engines), motor cyclists, power station and shift engineers; also for semi-skilled drivers, petrol, and unskilled men of good education. Ages, ex Service 18 to 30, civilians 18 to 26. Pay starts 3/- to 4/- a day. Allowance for wife and children to men 26 and over. There are also a few vacancies for ex-Royal Army Pay Corps clerks under special conditions for four years' service. Maximum age limit 38 years. Write, stating age, or call, Inspector of Recruiting, R.A.F., 4, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2.; R.A.F. Recruiting Depot, 41, Church Street, Birmingham; R.A.F. Recruiting Depot, 298, Bath Street, Glasgow.

EMIGRATION.

FARM LABOURERS, experienced, WANTED FOR ONTARIO, Canada; to sail next spring. Also farmers with small capital. Situations guaranteed. — Particulars free from Ontario Government Office, 163, Strand, London, W.C.2.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES.

ADVERTISERS.—The most powerful Combination of "County," Country and "Net Sale" Newspapers ever collected in one group at inclusive rates of 7/-. per line, 65/- per inch, with service. Territory, 20 counties. Also, 56 Provincial Newspapers or 46 London and Suburban at 3/11 per line, 39/- per inch (13 counties). Write or call for Prospectuses.—Buttolph and Dickson (Series Dept. 60), 190, Strand, London, W.C.2. Phone: City 842.

£5 to £10 weekly can easily be earned for a small outlay of 30/-. No previous experience necessary.—Write for particulars to H. Levaine (Dept. J.B.), 143, Houndsditch, London.

BUILD up a Mail-Order Business without buying stock. Scheme endorsed by authorities. —Write, Noble Bros., Tavistock Chambers, Nottingham.

FACSIMILE Typewritten Letters save time and money. One firm will suit you.—Stamp, Morgan and Co. (Suite 1), 356, Brockley Road, S.E.4.

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CYCLISTS!—The most wonderful Cycle Book ever published. Absolutely free. Cycles! Tyres! Accessories! Just write "Catalogue, Please," on a postcard to H. Fitzpatrick, Dept. 52, Burnley

PLUSH TOYS. SPECIAL XMAS OFFER.—Very handsome life-like pigeon or duck in lovely plush colours, Red, Pink, Yellow, Silver Grey. Bargain price, only 1/6 P.O., post free. Made on the premises by advertiser. Sold under the JOHN BULL guarantee printed on page 23. Send to-day.—"Santa Claus," 694, Seven Sisters Road, London, N.15.

BILLIARD Table to place on your dining table, from £7 15s.; suit any room; easy payments.—Write for free list to E. J. Riley, Limited, Barbican Works, Accrington.

MOST ACCEPTABLE CHRISTMAS GIFT. —Handsome Cigarette and Treasury Note Case, in superb black morocco, English manufacture, neat, handy, and unusually cheap. Money refunded if not satisfied. 3/3, post free. Penwell's, Lamorna C., Western College Road, Plymouth.

PLAYS, DIALOGUES, STUMP SPEECHES, English, Irish and Scotch Reciters, Song Books, Joke Books and Funny Stories, Jew Jokes, Home Games, Recitations and Riddles for Children, Dream Books, Fortune Tellers, &c. Send for McGlennon's Wonderful Catalogue. —FELIX McGLENNON, LTD. (Desk No. 27), 9, City Garden Row, London, N.1.

WRITE for our Catalogue of Boots, Clothing, Watches, Clocks, Accordions, etc., on easy terms. 4/- monthly.—Master's, Ltd., 83, Hope Stores, Rye.

CHEAPER COAL.—Greater heat, less consumption. Coal bills halved, 1/-. 6-cwt. genuine economiser. 3d. postage.—Aldridge (B.), Stanford Bridge, Worcester.

CHINA, Earthenware, crates from £3. Tea, Dinner and Toilet ware, great variety. Lists free.—Denbigh Pottery, Stoke-on-Trent.

ZYPRO PEARLS.—Experts have difficulty in detecting Zypro Gems from real pearls, they have such wondrous lustre and beauty. Send P.O. to-day to Fowler, Dept. 7, 21, St. Mary's Walk, Scarborough, and an 18-inch necklet—2 inches longer than any other advertised—will be forwarded in dainty plush-lined case. Money refunded if not absolutely satisfied.

A GREAT LITTLE GIFT for a man. 8/6 post free. "ALPHA" Portable Trouser Press and Suit Hanger keeps suit smart to the end. Satisfaction guaranteed.—May & Co., Dept. 41, 3, Tudor Street, London, E.C.4.

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DRESS.

REAL Harris and Lewis Homespuns, direct from makers; best quality only; patterns free. Harris Tweed Depot, James Street, Stornoway.

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ESSANKO'S SERVICEABLE GIFT, men's woollies for cold days, all wool, long sleeves, two pockets, colours grey, fawn, steel, heather, 6/11, carriage 6d. Money refunded if not satisfied.—Stephenson, Dept J, 12, Greens End, London, S.E.18.

GENT'S fleeced Cardigans, all wool, fawns and heathers. An 18/6 line for 15/6 each. Cash with order.—Campbell Gray, 11, College Street, Belfast.

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IF YOU ARE not keen to make big money as a Commercial Traveller, don't answer this advertisement; if you are, we can help you.—Write for our free booklet, Dept. 30, Phœnix School of Business, Ltd., 439, Oxford St., W.1.

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ABANDON UNEMPLOYMENT, become a qualified Motor Driver, with official Certificate for 3 guineas. Pupils introduced to positions free.—Write or call, Secretary, British School of Motoring, Ltd., 5, Coventry Street, Piccadilly, W.1. Also advanced and Engineering Courses.

HOW to secure a congenial Government, Municipal or Secretarial position in the shortest possible time. — Address, Principal, Sanitary Training College, 335, High Holborn, London.

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THE CURE FOR WORMS. — Be your own Doctor. "Artico" Worm Tablets are a Specialist's cure in tablet form, and positively and permanently cure violent cases. No fasting, no dieting, no interference daily habits. Generous supply, 1/6, post paid, with proof of cure. Send to-day.—Ridyard Tablet Co., Mfg. Chemists, 34-38, High Street, Codnor, Derbyshire.

ENERGOTS BRING HEALTH, clear eyes, faultless complexion, strenuous vitality, strong nerves, perfect digestion, and a happy disposition. One tablet daily. Trial Box (60 tabs.), 1/6.—Energots (Dept. J.B.), 12, Bessborough Gardens, London, S.W.1.

☛ *"Small Ads. Worth Watching."*
Continued on page 25.
Be sure you read them.

From a Photo by Personality Photo Press
CARPENTIER in his BARRY SINGLE-BREASTED SUIT.

A 6 GUINEA ALL WOOL Blue Serge SUIT for £3 : 10 : 0

TO MEASURE.

Indigo Dyed, London Shrunk and absolutely guaranteed

ALL WOOL

By Conditioning House Certificate quoted below.

Cut and tailored to your own measurements (we are exclusively measure tailors doing no ready-made trade). You will have a suit produced by experts with eighteen years' actual and practical experience of clothes building.

Report of the Conditioning House on the material from which this remarkable £3 10 0 Blue Serge Suit is made:

"I HAVE ANALYSED THIS PATTERN OF CLOTH, AND FIND IT COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF WOOL." Signed E. H. TOWNEND, for the CITY OF BRADFORD CORPORATION

NO OTHER FIRM IN THE WORLD COULD WORK ON OUR LOW MARGIN OF PROFIT.

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PURE NEW WOOL SUIT
To measure for
£2 : 10 : 0
Valued as worth double by many of our Clients.

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PURE NEW WOOL OVERCOAT
"Warmth without weight"
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(lined throughout)
The finest value ever offered in Tailoring History.

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PURE WOOLLEN WORSTED SUITINGS.
The Choicest products of our very best English Mills
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£6 : 6 : 0
Full Swallow Tail EVENING DRESS
£6 : 10 : 0

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With our patterns we send you the BARRY SELF-MEASUREMENT FORM (The Silent Tailor), when from your own measures we guarantee your completest satisfaction, or undertake to refund not only the amount you have paid us, but 2/6 more than has been paid. Could we make such an offer, we ask, were our performance one little whit behind our promise? Obviously not.

YOU HAVE THEREFORE NOTHING TO LOSE BY SEEING OUR PATTERNS, and we shall feel privileged if you will send for these. We shall not approach you by follow-up letters after we have once sent our patterns. We never bother our clients with circulars either about special offers or anything else. WE KNOW OUR PATTERNS WILL MAKE EFFECTIVE APPEAL.

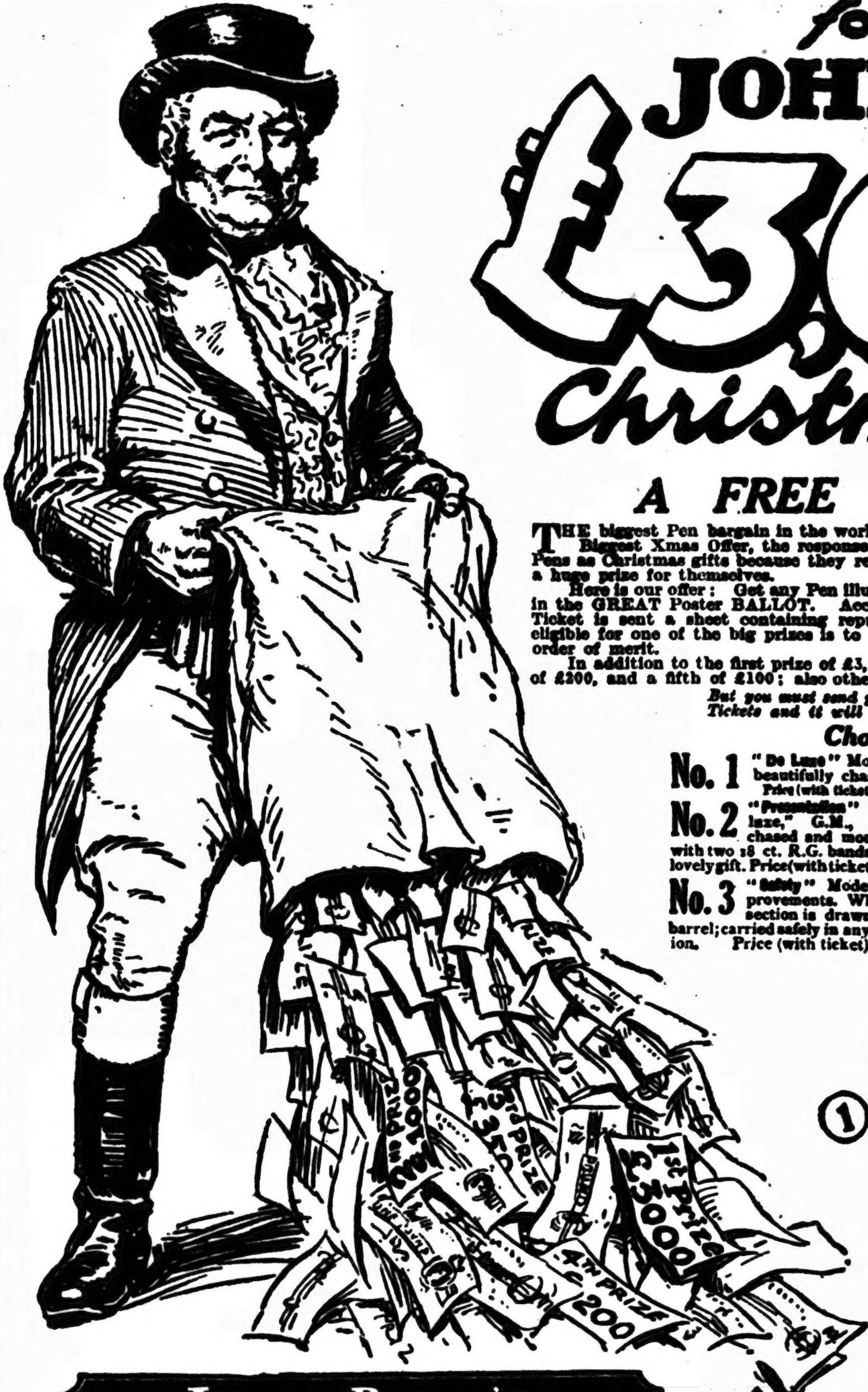
THE BARRY SERVICE IS UNIQUE IN TAILORING.

S. A. BARRY & CO., Call or Write,

(J.B. Dpt.) 26, City Rd., London, E.C.1 (Near Moorgate Tram and Tube Terminus.)

Telephone Number for Free Patterns: Clerkenwell 4209.

Tremendous Rush *for the* JOHN BULL £3,000 Christmas Offer



A FREE BALLOT TICKET.

THE biggest Pen bargain in the world, and a chance to win £3,000! This sums up JOHN BULL'S Biggest Xmas Offer, the response to which has been overwhelming. Many are buying these Pens as Christmas gifts because they recognise their astounding value and the opportunity of winning a huge prize for themselves.

Here is our offer: Get any Pen illustrated and we will purchase on your behalf a 2s. 6d. Ticket in the GREAT Poster BALLOT. Accept the Ticket as our Christmas present to you. With your Ticket is sent a sheet containing reproductions of fifteen posters. All you have to do to become eligible for one of the big prizes is to place ten of these posters in what you consider their proper order of merit.

In addition to the first prize of £3,000, there is a second prize of £1,000, a third of £350, a fourth of £200, and a fifth of £100; also other cash prizes from £10 to £1—in all £5,000.

But you must send your order now—this offer is limited to 10,000 Tickets and it will not be long before they are all snapped up.

Choose from the following Pens:

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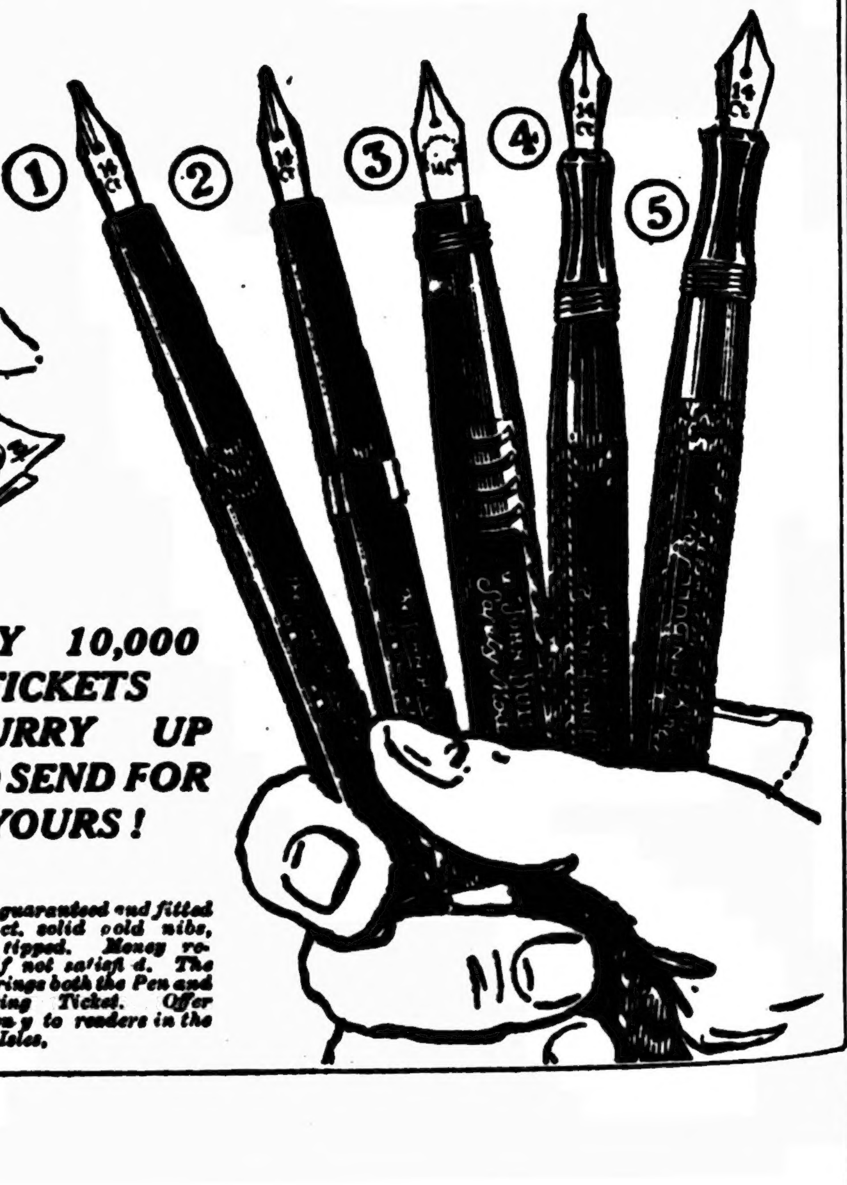

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Vol. XXXII. No. 863.
Week ending Saturday,
Dec 16 1922. Twopence

JOHN BULL

93, Long Acre,
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Telephone: Gerrard 9866
Telegrams: Heroically, London

For the People—— the Right to Justice and Truth,

The Paper on which the Sun :: Never Sets ::

The World, the Flesh, & the Devil

The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.

The New Way Not to Pay Old Debts.

Berlin is preparing new and well-considered schemes for the Reparations Commission. When they are rejected she will prepare others. The war is receding into ancient history—but Germany is not paying up.

The Liberal Divisions.

The prospects of reunion between the Wee Frees and the Wee "Gees" is not so rosy as most people imagine. There are already large vested interests in Lloyd George's funds and organisation. And money talks.

Stubborn Plutocrats.

Money will eventually decide leadership. There are many Wee Frees with money who have ideas on this subject not at all flattering to Mr. Lloyd George.

The Real Rivals.

Watch Sir John Simon. The conflict is not between Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George, but between Mr. Lloyd George and Sir John Simon.

Disposals Board Disposed Of.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announces that the Disposals Board is to go. Another tribute to JOHN BULL, which has consistently demanded its abolition.

Laying It On.

Agriculture is in such a plight that farmers are prepared to support any Party which will help them. So Mr. Lloyd George, with his ear to the ground again, has gone "back to the land." But farmers are not all simple.

Home and Duty.

Many Labour members complain that they cannot live on £400 a year. If they have to go home to their constituents every week-end, of course they can't. They should have free railway passes. It is hard for a man to be separated from his family while doing public service.

Blocking the Road.

Mr. Saklatvala, the Labour Communist member for Battersea, has already shown himself skilful at parliamentary obstruction. And this upon a measure to increase trade and provide work. The unemployed *will* be grateful.

Before and After.

Commander Kenworthy asks if it is not a fact that very little work is done in the War Office after 4.30 p.m. The real point is how little is done before that hour.

His Master's Voice.

Tchitcherin is ruling the Turk at Lausanne. So much the worse for the Turk. Lord Curzon was right in being curt to the Soviet Envoy, who is suffering from excessive self-esteem.

A Stern Warning.

Titled company-directors in the City are in a panic. They must learn that positions of trust imply serious obligations. Guinea-pigs may be much too expensive pets.

Exit Splendid Isolation.

America's demand for the freedom of the Straits marks her admission that she cannot keep out of world politics. JOHN BULL congratulates *Uncle Sam* on sharing the white man's burden.

Where the Money Goes.

The country which deals harshly with war-widows spent over a million on locomotive engines built at Woolwich. Now we are told "the prospects of sale are not good." Of course no one will be called to account.

Generosity to Rumanian Oil Kings.

Shareholders in Rumanian Oil Fields, Ltd., are to be compensated, with a million of money, for the temporary closing of their mines to frustrate the advancing Germans. If we had left these mines to the Germans we should have saved this money.

Our Waiting List.

Meantime, while compensations are being handed out, what about the victims in this country of German air-raids? Must they wait till Rumanian oil kings are restored to prosperity?

The Tragedy of Ireland.

The Irish Free State has been baptised in blood. Although this country has no longer any responsibility, it extends its sincere sympathy to the new Government. Obviously, until De Valera is laid by the heels there will be no peace in Ireland.

Syndicated Dukes.

Great landowners, including Dukes, are forming their estates into trusts and syndicates. The proposed Capital Levy is not to touch company holdings, and the exemptions make the division of a great interest in land desirable. The result of a Capital Levy would confound its optimistic advocates.

Sharpening the Axe.

The Treasury is to ration the spending departments. A wise decision, which we have constantly urged. There is still plenty of room for cuts.

Accommodating Ladies.

Since the Labour Party became the Official Opposition, certain Society ladies have been tumbling over each other to press their claims as official hostesses.

The Mystery Letters.

The anonymous letter-writing epidemic is still flourishing in Littlehampton, and the culprit is still at large. Isn't it time a real effort was made to solve this mystery?

A Shabby Decision.

The War Graves Commission refuses to make grants to widows who paid for memorials before the Commission undertook to supply them. Is it creditable for a great country to rob war-widows on so paltry a pretext?

Fast and Furious.

The notorious Queenie Gerald is furious at her exposure in the columns of JOHN BULL. But she is not of a retiring disposition. She is now negotiating for a house in Conduit Street. We give the police the tip.

A Disgraceful Scene.

For hours before the opening of the Ilford trial a queue of gaping women in fur coats besieged the Old Bailey. Morbid curiosity which makes a spectacle of human suffering is a disgrace to those concerned.

High Speed Divorce.

Judge Rigby Swift, at Leeds, disposed of 46 divorce cases in an average of seven minutes each. This appropriately named judge certainly cannot be reproached with the old complaint of the law's delay.

The Quality of Mercy.

The suicide pact is undoubtedly an indicaotin of mental deficiency. But Symonds, who lost both legs in the tragedy in which the girl he ruined was killed, ought not to be hanged. In this country one does not carry a legless man to the scaffold and hang him.

Fugitives.

With Conscription now the law in the Irish Free State the "patriots" who sought Irish Domicile to avoid Military Service here have during the Great War discovered that they are not Irish at all and rather than serve they are rushing back to Britain. Well, we don't want them.

The Case-Hardened Judge.

"Are you appealing to my feelings?" said Judge Cluer when a pathetic plea was put forward. "Because I have no feelings." Well, we are sorry, because now we cannot hurt his feelings by saying what we think!

His Last Thought.

Crushed and bleeding from a fractured skull sustained in a collision with a tramcar in Old Kent Road, a carman named Frederick Albert Smith was taken to Hospital. The only words that passed his lips before he died were an anxious inquiry about his horses. What a lesson for the brutes who seem to take a delight in ill-treating animals!

Santa Claus from the Cape.

A mysterious rich man from South Africa has opened his purse in Hackney and spent £500 in providing good things for 200 ex-Service men who had at least two children apiece. We are glad there are still some good men left. His Christmas will certainly be a happy one.

A Vale of Tears.

Sad, indeed, is the state of affairs among the colliers of Ebbw Vale. Owing to the stoppage of work there is no money for food, and the children are actually attending school with their feet encased in brown-paper bags smeared with blacking, for lack of shoes to wear. "Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers?"

Trees of Tragedy.

There is much to be said for the Italian method of commemorating the number of those who were killed in the War. Half a million trees are to be planted, and to each one is to be attached a tablet giving the name and rank, etc., of the man killed. We commend the plan to our own authorities, for in addition to remembering the dead, it would be a useful scheme of afforestation.

Lunacy—a Crime!

Owen Whitehead, a Sutton lad of 18, has been sentenced to 15 months' hard labour for arson. He had been convicted for a similar offence on two previous occasions, and he was stated to be mentally deficient. There was every reason therefore for sending him to a Home, instead of to a place where he will get neither treatment nor sympathy. Such sentences are almost as senseless as poor Owen Whitehead.

The Tramps Who Live—

The Rev. J. Edwards, an Atherstone (Warwickshire) Guardian, has a strange notion of what constitutes the Christian spirit. He opposed a scheme to try to induce aged and infirm vagrants to take up permanent quarters in the workhouse. He had never, he said, heard of a tramp dying or being buried. Probably he is well known to the class, who steer clear of his district.

The Tramp Who Died.

Found lying exhausted in the roadway outside Westbury Workhouse, a homeless vagrant named James Goulding was taken inside and died. It transpired that he had been at Warminster the night before, and had asked to see a doctor at the Union there, producing a certificate showing that he suffered from his heart. His request was refused, and he had tramped the four miles to Westbury in a dying condition. What have the Warminster Guardians to say about it? And will the Rev. J. Edwards note this?

The Exploding Coal.

In France they are greatly excited over the alleged mystery explosions in stoves fed with British coal. The real mystery is how cartridges and other explosives never seen in this country got into the coal consignments. Perhaps the French Anarchists who are again busy could throw some light on the mystery?

Chris'mas Cheer at Kingston.

The Kingston Guardians have proved themselves more generously disposed towards the poor than have their colleagues of Camberwell. The inmates of Kingston Workhouse are to be provided with beer with their Christmas dinner. If it were allowed, we fancy there would be an immediate exodus from the Camberwell to the Kingston institution.

Magisterial Callousness.

Ten shillings for throwing pepper into a dog's eyes, and injuring them so badly that the poor brute had to be destroyed to put it out of its agony. It sounds incredible, but that was the size of the fine inflicted by the Oldham Magistrates on Fred Halstan and Jane Cadman. One wonders who were the more callous; Halstan and Cadman or the Magistrates who inflicted such a ridiculously light penalty.

Fashionable Child Murder.

With relentless severity the authorities are pursuing their campaign against doctors who perform illegal operations on poor women eager to escape the responsibility of more children than they can hope to maintain, but never a hand is lifted against the operations of the West End doctors who achieve the same object in a different way on the plea that child bearing would involve great danger to the lives of their rich patients.

A Cheeky Swede.

Adolf Ohrström, of Majorsgatan 9, Gothenburg, Sweden, seems to imagine that Englishmen are fools who soon part with their money. He writes, "I now offer to furnish you with a special list of Swedish buyers for your goods—the price is moderate—only £1. The names are all live ones. When sending me your cheque for £1, you might let me know whether there is any line of yours that you particular want to push for export?" Yes, Swedish and other alien twisters.

When a Road Hog Gets Drunk.

The one law for the rich and another for the poor idea is nonsense, but it is fostered by the silly sentences so often imposed by tolerant magistrates. Harold Wrigley, Cromwell Avenue, Whalley Range, got so drunk one night that when driving his motor-car he knocked down a man without knowing it. On being challenged, instead of expressing regret, he became quarrelsome. He was fined 40s., and told to consider himself lucky. We're certain he did; but why should he get the chance?

Be Wary!

We have received a number of enquiries regarding Murray, Coutts and Co., Ltd., of 68, Coleman Street, London, E.C., who offer branch managerships of billiards halls at £300 a year to applicants willing to invest £500. As recently as September 2nd we pointed out that this was a newly-formed company with a capital of £500, of which only two shillings was then paid up. We can only repeat our warning to be wary of all such offers of employment with investment.

Swank Up-to-date.

On pay-day do yourself well seems to be the motto of Evelyn Bird, an unemployed shop assistant of Lonsdale Street, Accrington. When fined 20s. for travelling first-class on the railway with a third-class ticket she confessed that she often did it when on the way to collect the dole. She'll probably use a Rolls Royce next time.

Reward of Lifetime Service.

Mr. J. F. Complin, Chairman of Alton Guardians, is reported to have been "surprised" when the other day an old soldier of 22 years service wearing half-a-dozen war ribbons came before the Board for relief. "I suppose you have a pension?" he questioned. "Yes," was the reply, "a big one—eightpence a day." And, 'pon our word, he has earned it.

A Chance for a Philanthropist.

Rugby Guardians have decided that they cannot afford to allow 2s. per adult recipient of out-relief and 1s. per dependent child as a special Christmas gift. The extra cost would be £42 or £43. They agreed, however, to give 1s. per week extra for dependent children of the unemployed. We cannot blame the Guardians, but surely there is some rich man in Rugby who could spare £42?

Money-Grabbing Ministries.

What the Chairman (Alderman G. W. Hobson) agreed was a very hard case came before the Worcestershire Old Age Pensions Committee, that of a woman who did not know her age, the only record of it having been destroyed in the burning of the Four Courts, Dublin—through no fault of her own. The Ministry had refused her application for a pension. Ministries are made to administer. Why grab the chance to rob an old woman?

Treat 'Em Rough!

When a man like William Pearson is brought before magistrates they ought to handle him without gloves. This Accrington rotter deserted his family three years ago, and his wife and four children had to be maintained by the Guardians at a cost of £317. He joined the Army and became a deserter. The Magistrates gave him a month in gaol, but considerately suspended the commitment for a similar period. This is about the limit in tenderness.

The Waiting Women.

There are six elderly women employed at the L.C.C. lodging house in Parker Street, W.C. from whose small wages insurance contributions were deducted for a considerable period before it was discovered that they were classed as domestic servants. It is many months since this discovery was made, yet every application for a refund of the money illegally deducted is met with the curt reply, "You must wait." Why? The poor old souls badly need the money, and it is disgraceful that it should be withheld.

We Did It.

Mr. Ralph Dawson, the victim of the "Shocking Police Bungle" which we described at length in our issue of September 9th, had a more pleasant experience last week. He was asked to attend the C.I.D. Office at Limehouse Police Station, where he was handed a few crisp fivers from the Home Secretary as a solace for the indignities which he had suffered. As he says, "JOHN BULL has undoubtedly been the instigation of getting me my compensation." We congratulate him, the Home Secretary and, last but not least, ourselves.

The Poor Help the Poor.

"I can see no reason why I should be called upon to support the poor when I can't support myself," said an out-of-work engineer summoned at Whitehall (Hants) for non-payment of poor rate. His is the logical view, but the Court won't admit it.

Thwarted.

Recent revelations we made regarding the Breach of Promise Blackmailing Scandal caused a provincial solicitor, acting in an important case, to defy the other side, and in due course the bluffing case was withdrawn rather than face exposure of the real motives for it.

Huns for Christmas.

As there are already far too many Germans in this country, we trust British employers will act in the full sense of patriotism by declining to give work to any more coming in as a result of the expiry of the special clauses of the Aliens Act. While Britons starve in their own country not a single German should be given our bread.

Builders Who Don't Build.

The dole costs the taxpayer £890,000 a week. Thousands of the unemployed receiving this money are builders. The house shortage is a national scandal—a danger to health and morality. Then why in the name of commonsense are we paying able-bodied builders to stand on street corners sucking straws? Why not set them to work building houses, and thus get something for our money?

An Unspeakable Ruffian.

Three years' penal servitude seems but a mild punishment for an offence of such enormity as that of Police Constable Alistair McHardy, of Newtongrange, Scotland. This unspeakable ruffian made indecent suggestions to a little girl of twelve, and stifling her piteous pleadings for mercy, did his damnedest to debauch and murder his helpless little victim. A creature so depraved should be rendered physically incapable of repeating such an atrocity. A term of imprisonment which will leave him free to gratify his bestial passions at the expense of some other innocent child when he is released is useless.

"While the Grass is Growing——"

Out of work and threatened with eviction, a former employee of the L.C.C. Education Department asked us if we could expedite the refund of Unemployment Insurance contributions due to him. We communicated with the Education Officer, who referred us to a letter he had written on October 26th, in which he stated that he had made application to the Ministry of Labour for the refund in July last, and that when it had been obtained from them it would be paid at the earliest possible moment. This is rare and refreshing fruit gone rotten.

Trust Them Not.

There's a lot of oil touts about just now. One is W. Nicholas Green, of the Leasehold Oil Lands Co., 27, Chancery Lane, W.C. 1, who wants to sell one-acre leases in Texas for £3 3s. Another is Mike Healy, of Fort Worth, Texas, who wants British workers to assist in financing the Mike Healy Texas Pool, and suggests that if they do so they will have a secure income while on strike. A third is H. A. Ashton, of the *Stock Exchange Mail*, 142, Fleet Street, E.C. 4, who offers Ordinary shares in Packer's Oil Company and other rubbish. All these enterprising gentry should be given a wide berth.

Brum's Slums—

A report of the Public Health Committee on overcrowding in Birmingham provides such ghastly details as these: One living room, one bedroom. Occupants: Father and mother and 7 children. Another daughter in sanatorium.

22 In Three Bedrooms—

Three bedrooms, kitchen, and living room. Occupants: Three families. First: Father and mother and ten children aged 14 years to 4 months. Second: Father and mother and five children aged 19 years to one year. Third: Father and mother and one child of 1½ years. Total, 22 persons.

The Coming of Famine.

The overcrowding problem is a poverty problem. The Lord Mayor of Birmingham has just stated that unemployment has reached such proportions in the City that one-third of the population are in dire distress. So perishes the nation.

Honour to Whom Honour—

By the Rev. R. J. CAMPBELL, D.D.

THE shooting of the Greek ex-Premier and other statesmen of that unfortunate country, together with highly placed officers of its defeated army, a tragedy which has shocked the whole civilised world, awakens some serious reflections.

For a parallel thereto we should have to imagine the arraignment and putting to death of Mr. Asquith and the leading members of his Government, including Lord Kitchener, in the darkest days of our struggle with Germany.

We should have to add Lord French and his staff.

Or coming to more recent times, and with more immediate bearing upon the Near East imbroglio, we should have to picture Mr. Bonar Law ordering Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Churchill, Lord Balfour and Lord Birkenhead before a firing party at the Tower of London.

It is inconceivable, yet we used to do this kind of thing.

Time was when almost any minister who fell from power in this country went as a matter of course to his death.

After a disaster to the English arms in France in the middle of the fifteenth century, comparable to that of the Greeks in Asia Minor to-day, the King's chief adviser, the Duke of Suffolk, fled across the sea to Flanders, but was intercepted off Calais and, after a sort of rough and ready court martial, had his head hacked off in an open boat.

Nor may we forget the fate of Wolsey, Strafford, Laud, and Admiral Byng.

The last named had to sit down in his own chair on his own quarter deck to be shot for failing to capture a fortress that was too strong for him.

That was not so very long ago.

We have learned a little better nowadays because we realise something of our obligation to those who administer our affairs and fight our battles.

But public life is still a fierce and thankless occupation.

If we were wise we should give more encouragement to our best men to enter it.

If we were true to the responsibilities of citizenship we should give them ungrudging trust and support.

We owe a deeper debt of gratitude to our leaders and defenders than we can ever pay.

Broad-Minded Glasgow.

It is good to know that at least one body of civic chiefs is inclined to take a commonsense view of the question of lotteries for charitable purposes. The position up till now has been too unsatisfactory, but the Glasgow magistrates have now approved the amendment of the Lotteries Act in the direction of legalising lotteries held for the benefit of charity. They are wise men in the North.

Rifts in the Lute of Love.

Mr. J. W. Mitchell, Chairman of the Blackpool Bench, when he had Fred Grindrod before him, he confessed he had himself scores of rows with his own wife but had never left home because of them. "It's the making up that is best," he added. If he will only supply the recipe for this "making-up" it may turn out to be the panacea the world has been seeking since Eden was closed to Adam and Eve.

Undesirables and a Club.

We heartily congratulate the Committee of the Eclectic Club, 42, Jermyn Street, Piccadilly, on the fact that such dubious persons as Mrs. Sidney Wright—known also as "Mrs. Bush" and "Mrs. Starl"—Dr. "Vanstone" or "Vincent," and Mrs. Annie Brittain, are not members, as was at one time thought to be the case.

Free Trade in Filth.

For the purpose of collecting revenue, the Government exercises close supervision over the importation of films into this country, and practically every consignment is subjected to close inspection by the Customs officers. That, however, does not prevent the importation of German films of an unspeakably filthy nature into this country, mostly for "release" at private shows organised by gangs of the degenerate ornaments of Society.

One Woman—One Job.

We observe that last week Miss Mabel Green not only appeared at every performance of "The Smith Family" at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, but dashed twice nightly to appear in a sketch at the Victoria Palace. It may not have occurred to this vivacious actress that she was preventing some less fortunate professional sister from earning a living. We hope it will occur to her now.

Police Blackmailers.

Lord Russell, who is an authority on police administration, says: "My experience in the matter leads me to believe that there is a certain amount of persecution and a certain amount of blackmail among, at any rate, some officers of the Force, and it is said even to extend to the rank of inspectors." This is no news to us. Many prostitutes are forced to submit to blackmail. Will Mr. Bridgeman prove the Hercules to sweep this Augean stable clean?

Jack Cornwell's Memorial.

Messrs. Edgar G. Rees, Ltd., the Llanelly shipbreakers, inform us that there was no memorial tablet to Jack Cornwell, V.C., on any part of H.M.S. *Chester* when she was handed over to them for demolition. They themselves fixed a plate inscribed "Boy J. T. Cornwell. V.C., fell mortally wounded on this spot," when they opened the ship for public exhibition, and this is the plate which hangs in their office. We are glad to receive their explanation. Where, then, is the original memorial tablet to the sailor boy hero? Will the Admiralty kindly let us know?

A PEER WHO WON'T APPEAR

A Case where Noblesse Does Not Oblige

Can courage be expected from a Baron who borrows half-crowns from poor neighbours to pay his train fare to the City and who does not consider his honour important enough to defend?

WHATEVER is happening to our Peerage?

If the Right Honourable Lawrence William Palk, third Baron Haldon, is to be taken as a sample, they are becoming a weak-kneed lot indeed.

The earliest meaning of the word Baron, our dictionaries inform us, was strong man, bold man, warrior, noble man.

In Lord Haldon we have discovered one who is neither strong nor bold, but weak and timid, who is so little of a warrior that he fears to fight; so far from a noble man that he beats an ignoble retreat rather than face an issue touching his honour which he has himself raised.

Some months ago, under the heading, "A North Sea Bubble," we exploded a flat-catching ramp regarding some mythical sunken treasure which was being boosted by a concern calling itself The London Industrial and Trade Development Company, Ltd., of Kingsway Chambers, London, W.C. The concluding paragraph of that article read as follows :—

"The fact that the name of the Rt. Hon. Lord Haldon appears at the head of the circular as the principal Director of the Company will not inspire any special confidence in the scheme among readers of JOHN BULL."

Scarcely was the printers' ink dry when we had a writ for libel served upon us by the legal representative of the Right Honourable Lawrence William Palk, Baron Haldon.

We duly entered an appearance, and would have been perfectly content to contest the action on the issue raised by the noble Lord, but when the ring was cleared for action, as it were, lo and behold, the Baron refused to fight, and we obtained an Order dismissing the Action for want of prosecution.

It is not altogether surprising that this Peer of the Realm should deem the defence of his reputation of so little account when the record of his association with a number of concerns floated for the purpose of extracting money from the foolish is considered.

We are ever ready to lend a sympathetic ear to a plea of poverty if it is accompanied by evidence of industry and deserving effort. But surely even a noble Peer without any outstanding intellectual attainments should find it possible, by dint of honest, hard work, to avoid such a humiliating situation as that in which this aristocrat placed himself recently at the Croydon County Court.

He was sued, like any common labourer, for arrears of a weekly allowance payable to his wife under a deed of separation.

At the first hearing he pleaded that he was out of work, and asked for an adjournment for a month, which was granted.

At the expiration of that period he did not appear, but sent a medical certificate that he was unable to follow his occupation.

A month later, Her Ladyship's Counsel cast doubts on the genuineness of the certificate on the ground that on the day he was supposed to be ill the noble Lord was seen frequenting public houses.

Eventually, the Right Honourable defendant offered to pay £2 a month, and an Order was made accordingly.

By honest, hard work, too, this Peer might place himself beyond the necessity of borrowing half-crowns and crowns from poor neighbours at Thornton Heath to pay his fare to the City, and we should not have to explain to correspondents the hopelessness of recovering such small sums.

Again we ask, whatever is happening to our Peerage?

THE PROCTOR'S BULLY

How a Woman Paid the Price of Freedom

The persistent and relentless attentions of an Agent of the King's Proctor which, following on a Woman's Suit for Divorce, not only endangered her good name but ruined her health.

IT is the law of this dear land of ours that if a woman, in the innocence or foolishness of her youth contracts a marriage with a beast, discovers her mistake, possesses sufficient cash to prove to the Court her husband's adultery, coupled with cruelty or desertion, she shall be granted a decree of divorce.

Before it is made absolute, however, the woman must wait six calendar months, and if there is evidence that she has misconducted herself during that period the decree is annulled.

It is in the collecting of such evidence that the department of the King's Proctor excels, and the experience of a lady, whose name for obvious reasons we withhold, is illuminative of the despicable methods which the Proctor's agents evidently employ in their investigations.

Briefly her history is this:

Thrown on her own resources at an early age, she had the misfortune to meet and marry a man who quickly proved himself to be a rotter. She had no money to pay for divorce proceedings. For five years her life was a hell.

Then came the war. Well educated, and possessed of considerable organising skill, she secured a post in the War Office, and quickly worked her way up to an important and remunerative post.

The man had sufficient influence to escape conscription, but sufficient decency to agree to a separation.

This most unhappy woman took a mansion flat in the Victora district, shared it with another girl, and set herself determinedly to the saving of sufficient money to gain her freedom. Not until the end of the war was this made possible, and by that time she had made the acquaintance of a decent man, and learnt for the first time in her life what real love is.

After dreary months of waiting the case was heard, and a decree nisi pronounced, the husband making no defence. *The six months probation began.* But the nervous strain of the proceedings had already brought the woman to the verge of collapse. She had to give up her post, and as her girl friend had left, she was alone in the flat.

Not many days had passed before she learnt that a man had been making enquiries of the mansion caretaker as to what was going on in Flat 15. Did the owner have any male friends? What were her hours? Had any man been seen leaving the flat in the early morning?

His victim decided to let the flat and go to a private hotel. She had not been there long, however, before the man was once more on her trail—button-holing the servants, and making such enquiries as to suggest that she was of a loose character. The manageress insisted on her leaving. She was forced to enter a nursing home. But such a sanctuary is an expensive one and back to the flat she went. The agent quickly appeared, and kept a faithful watch to the bitter end.

The decree was made absolute. She married again at once.

But, alas, the strain of that six months has proved too great for her. She is now, physically and mentally, a wreck. And a specialist has just told her that she will be a chronic invalid for the rest of her life.

Day and night, *she is haunted by the memory of that bullying agent.*

Comment on this pitiful story is almost unnecessary.

The King's Proctor is still evidently considered to be an office essential to the proper governing of the State, and while this opinion is held, one can only suppose that the taxpayer will continue to support his bullies in their mean and unspeakably caddish occupation.

FEEDING THE BLACKMAILERS . . Foolish Folk and Inquisitive 'Phone Girls

DOES the Postmaster-General intend to take steps to put an end to the discreditable and even dangerous practice of "listening-in" which is indulged in by the persons who operate the telephone exchanges?

It is time he did. Everyone who uses the telephone has suffered from this annoyance and the Postmaster-General cannot blind himself to the fact.

But does he know that several girls attached to the Trunk exchange are in the habit of receiving presents in the shape of gloves, chocolates, silk stockings, etc., from bookmakers to whom they have given special attention by attending to their calls in preference to others.

Recently a well-known London producer had occasion to ring up the manager of a theatre in Manchester with reference to a new production he intended staging there in the new year. The arrangements for this production had been kept secret, only his intimate friends having any knowledge of the details.

The day following his telephone conversation with the Manchester manager, the actor was dining at a restaurant, and there met an acquaintance who surprised him by saying, "Hullo, old boy, I hear you are running a show at Manchester soon."

The actor was somewhat taken aback and said: "How the deuce do you know?"

"Oh" replied his acquaintance, "I heard all about it from a little telephone girl. One of her friends put your call through to Manchester, the other day."

The inference was obvious; the girl had been listening-in. Had this information by chance been conveyed to a rival producer it might have had very serious consequences.

Let the Postmaster-General consider that if more or less honest girls indulge in this practice and recount their experiences for the amusement of their friends, how much more harm could be done and may be done, by girls who have no scruples in making use of the information they thus acquire by passing it on to professional blackmailers.

Many a man in the hands of such crooks has been utterly at a loss to imagine how his secret, generally a personal one, and not of a criminal nature, came to be known to his persecutor. He has seldom suspected the telephone.

In a recent case in which an attempt was made to defraud bookmakers by means of faked telegrams, evidence was given in the Court which showed that a telephone girl had been in the habit of listening to private conversation. This proved to be in the public interest, but it also showed that such unwarranted tyranny received almost official recognition.

Could a better argument than this be put forward in favour of the universal establishment of automatic telephones?

Failing that, listening-in on any call should be made an offence punishable by immediate dismissal from the service.

Grave Scandal at Guy's Hospital.

Pain-racked Patient Left Unattended by Doctors for Months.

THE authorities of Guy's Hospital, which holds a high place in public esteem, are not we hope directly responsible for the sad blunder we here reveal. Probably, and we would like to think so, it is due to a complete failure on the part of certain officials to realise their obligations to patients in their charge.

HELPLESS, in constant pain, unable to move hand or foot, a broken man, with an injured thigh, was left lying for weeks in one of our great hospitals, unattended by the physicians and surgeons, whose duty it was to succour and safeguard him.

It is an almost incredible story. For this thing happened in no obscure or third-rate country cottage hospital. It happened in Guy's, one of the most famous and historic hospitals in the world.

Here is the story, documented with the admissions of wrong-doing from the hospital authorities themselves, together with an account of their desperate effort to persuade the victim not to place the facts before the world:

This victim is Mr. Arthur J. Hardy, formerly Secretary of the Malta Tramways, and afterwards Secretary of the Abu Tin Mines, Ltd., of Northern Nigeria. To-day he's helpless on a sick bed, in cheap lodgings, unable to move, at the end of his financial resources, and telling his story, however wounding to his personal pride, so that others may not suffer the neglect and callous treatment meted out to him.

When the war broke out, Mr. Hardy, like a good Englishman, threw up his job and started for home to do his bit. Unfortunately for him, he was held up at Malta, contracted malaria, and came out of the attack a broken man. Anchylosis had set in—that dread and baffling disease that hardens the joints, cripples the movements, and gradually chains down the sufferer to his bed of pain, where he lies helpless in body, tortured in mind, a spectacle to touch and move the least sensitive and most callous.

When he reached England, Hardy had fifteen hundred pounds. He spent it all going from hospital to hospital, from nursing home to nursing home, fighting desperately to get back his health. He got steadily worse.

Finally, in the spring of this year, he was taken to Guy's Hospital, for a skilled operation, from which he hoped everything. He was operated on. He came out of the operation suffering worse than he had ever suffered before.

Then began the amazing story of neglect. It commenced with sending two nurses to massage him—where four were needed to lift a big and heavy man. When he was massaged, his legs, which had just been operated on, were left dangling in the air!

Then he discovered that in the operation on him, a bone in his thigh had been broken—the neck of the femur. A *nurse* applied the splints to his broken bones—but ***neither physician, nor surgeon, nor student came to see him*** until three or four weeks, when the surgeon who had operated, looked at him, but never saw him again.

He saw doctors and students attending other patients. But this poor fellow, lying in helpless agony, suffering excruciating pains, complicated by bed-sores, was callously ignored. He stood it patiently and wonderingly all this time. Then he wrote to Dr. Hurst, the physician of the Hospital, who had seen him on admission. Hardy complained that he was not being properly treated, and received a reply from the Doctor's private address at Windsor, which reached him by post. This, to a point, reassured him.

Dr. Hurst, on seeing the man a few days later, told the House Surgeon to get him into another institution.

From that day, following on a cruel decision to send him to the Workhouse Infirmary, he was given no peace. He refused to go. He still had a few pounds.

Finally he left, to go to lodgings a casual visitor had secured for him. He was not sent in the hospital ambulance. He was *carried out on a wet and inclement day, and placed in an open grocer's cart,* with an awning over it—and paid for by himself. At the last moment a porter was sent with him, and fortunately saved a greater scandal, for the people at the lodgings, seeing how ill he was—refused to admit him.

He ultimately got lodgings in Eltham, and wrote to the Hospital asking for an explanation.

Lord Goschen, Treasurer of the Hospital, replied with the astonishing confession that his complaint that he had not been seen by the Physician for nearly four months and by the House Physician for nearly a month, was admitted by these officials, *to whom the House Committee had expressed their grave disapproval of their neglect to visit him while under their care.*

Rarely, we should think, has a letter so humiliating been written by the authorities of a great hospital. But even then the spirit of callous inconsiderateness continued. Hardy was *invited to come* (in the hospital ambulance) to discuss the matter with the Committee. On second thoughts the journey was not imposed on this agonising cripple. Lord Goschen went out to Eltham to see him.

The object of the visit, apparently, was to prevent publication of the facts.

There is the story. We add nothing more to it. Can any explanation or justification be given for this shockingly cruel and shabby treatment of a helpless sufferer in one of the greatest hospitals in the world?

If there is any sense of shame in the Hospital authorities, they will apologise publicly to this poor fellow, gallantly struggling with pain and poverty and ill-treatment, and give him the only consolation he seeks; the hope that his terrible sufferings will lead to the tendering of more human sympathy to the sick and suffering in Guy's.

TEA SHOP DELILAHS.

The Real Offender Who Goes Scott Free.

ARE the police asleep?

It is only a month or so ago that, following upon revelations made in JOHN BULL, proceedings were taken against four young women who were accused of disorderly conduct in connection with the management of a Threadneedle Street café, known as the Ashanti Tea Rooms.

The manageress was fined £6 and £2 2s. costs, or one month's imprisonment in default, two of the girls were bound over in their own recognisances of £10 to come up for judgment if called upon, and another was discharged.

A significant statement was made by Alderman Sir David Burnett in announcing his decision. He said: "The real offender in the present case is the proprietress of the rooms."

It seems almost inconceivable that the police can be ignorant of the identity of "the real offender" referred to by the Magistrate, but in the hope that they will profit by his remarks we willingly make them a present of her name and address together with information concerning her present activities to which they might well direct their attention.

She is Mrs. Marian Tuke, and lives at 11, Great Cumberland Place, W. She figured in an unpleasant divorce case some time ago as Mrs. Marian Hawes, and under this name is the proprietress of the Tudor Tea Rooms at 303, High Holborn, W.C., This woman ran a teashop at Cushion Court, E.C., and others at various addresses.

A visit to the Tudor Tea Rooms discloses an almost exactly similar state of things as at the "Ashanti."

The charge for tea and a small piece of toast is 1s. 6d., but it is customary for the patrons of this exotic establishment to invite the girls to have a cup of tea out of the same pot, when the charge becomes 3s. Kissing and cuddling of course are a part of the proceedings, and the amount of the customer's tip is apparently regulated by the extent of the caresses in which he is permitted to indulge.

In the Ashanti Tea Rooms prosecution this woman escaped. If further proceedings are taken by the police, we trust it will be against "the real offender."

BOARDING-OUT BARBARITY.

Mercy for a Merciless Child-beater.

WHEN will Poor Law authorities cease to neglect the welfare of children committed to their care?

The boarding-out system is one which must be conducted with great care if brutality is to be avoided.

It is the duty of Boards of Guardians to satisfy themselves as to the fitness of such persons to have the care of children. Too often, however, the boarding-out is done in such a casual and haphazard fashion that the lives of the little ones are made a misery at the hands of foster-parents, whose interest in the children begins and ends with the money they receive for their maintenance.

Such would appear to be the case at Gillingham, where Florence Catherine Topp, a widow, was convicted of wilfully assaulting three children in a manner likely to cause them unnecessary suffering.

The children were Robert William Miles, a little fellow of eight, and Norah and Gertrude Miles, his twin sisters, aged six, who had been boarded-out with the woman by the Shaftesbury Board of Guardians.

The proceedings were taken by the Guardians themselves, but it is impossible to exonerate them from responsibility in the matter. If they had exercised proper care in the selection of a foster-mother in the first place, the children would have been saved the terrible suffering which they had undergone.

A Ministry of Health Inspector found that all three children were badly bruised about the body. The backs of the two little girls were yellow and bore weals which indicated severe beating with a stick, and one had a large black bruise at the top of the arm where she had been tightly gripped while being thrashed.

The only excuse the brutal woman had to offer for punishing these little mites so severely was that they had certain unpleasant habits probably due to defective care.

Sir Harold Pelly, Bart, the Chairman of the Bench, fined her £1, and allowed her time to pay!

If that is his idea of an exemplary and deterrent punishment, it is not ours.

THE CROOKS' POST OFFICE

Round-Up of Accommodation Address Rogues

THE accommodation address snare is, as a result of the manner in which we have repeatedly denounced it, at last receiving official attention.

Scotland Yard has ordered that all persons in the Metropolitan area who take in letters "to be called for" must keep a strict register of the real addresses of the users. Call letters will now be subject to police scrutiny.

It may be said that this inflicts a hardship upon "innocent people" using these accommodation offices. But the use of these places is practically always associated with deceit or fraud. If an honest person, when travelling,, wishes to use an accommodation address, the Post Restante is at his service free of charge.

The police know what a blessing these "call offices" are to the crook as well as to the Don Juan who corresponds with women for the purpose of gaining confidence capable of being exploited for lust or gain.

There are hundreds of these accommodation address bureaus in London. Fulwood House and Cromwell House, Holborn, are simply nests of them. Others are in Great Windmill Street, W. (Nos. 32 and 34) and in Coleman Street, E.C.

The first point to be noted is that accommodation addresses are almost all run by foreigners. Usually they are hidden away in furtive little shops, with the notice "Letters may be Addressed Here."

Dealers in pornographic postcards from the Continent—vastly on the increase—have made full use in the past of these establishments. In many instances the keepers of the "letter box" have actually co-operated in this vile trade.

The begging-letter writer, now mobilising energy for the festive season, has always made full use of the "accommodation address." The notorious Maud Tarling used nearly twenty. It is certain the police supervision of the correspondence passing to certain people through the medium of the public post office will deal a heavy blow at these pests who prey upon the charitable.

Mean frauds upon the workless have been made possible by the ease with which good addresses (on paper) have been secured. Situations have been advertised in the provincial papers offering a "fine salaried post," and the applicant has received a printed form in reply bearing an imposing name. The applicant is informed that a fee for "inquiries into character" must be sent, but, needless to write, the whole thing proves a gross fraud.

Lastly, the despicable scoundrel who maintains a wide correspondence with silly women with the object of robbing or blackmailing them will now, we hope, find his letters overlooked and himself landed securely in the grip of the law.

ANOTHER EXHIBITION FIASCO

Gigantic and Impudent Money-Making Scheme

Birmingham's "International Exhibition of the Arts, Sciences, Industries and Commerce," timed to take place in 1923, will never be held. The whole thing is a fiasco perpetrated by one man.

THE resignation of Lord Templetown, Sir Joseph Cook, the Earl of Plymouth, Lord Leverhulme, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, Captain Arthur de Courcy Bower, Lord Aylesford, Lord Aberdare, Lord Leigh, and Sir Arthur Ponsonby from the Organising Committee of the Birmingham International Exhibition is a sign that these gentlemen have discovered that their names were being used to bolster up a money-making scheme which possessed no general trading or public object.

Despite the quantity of glowing literature issued by a Mr. A. Parry-Fielder, the originator of the scheme, there is not the slightest possibility of the much-heralded exhibition ever taking place.

Mr. A. Parry-Fielder describes himself as an architect. Apparently "Exhibitions" are his *forte*. He tried to float one some years ago at Adderley Park, Birmingham; and later, when the first proved abortive, engineered another in the same city, at Aston Cross. This, too, ended in smoke.

Then, with surprising audacity, Fielder started another scheme, in 1919, for an Exhibition at Felixstowe. A company was formed for the purpose of establishing a spacious palace, a kinematograph theatre, and, amongst other wonderful things, a huge "pleasure and amusement park." Fielder called his company the "Felixstowe Aquarium and Pleasure Parks, Ltd.," and, with the aid of the usual extravagant plans, soon procured sums of money from unsuspecting investors in a scheme which, like the other two, was doomed to failure.

For some considerable time, undaunted by his previous inglorious operations, Fielder has been sending out literature on a grand scale, from offices at 33, Cavendish Square, W., concerning his latest enterprise—the "Birmingham International Exhibition, 1923."

The spot chosen for the so-called Exhibition is the Reservoir, at Edgbaston, where 65 acres of water are surrounded by 7 acres of land.

This was originally occupied by Messrs. Salter's, the well-known Oxford boat proprietors, who used to run trips there. They gave an option to a Birmingham solicitor's clerk—for the purchase of their rights and the Corporation lease—for £11,500. The solicitor's clerk thereupon entered into a contract with Fielder and another to re-sell the property for the sum of £21,500—a difference of ten thousand pounds! Thus the "Birmingham International Exhibition, 1923," was born.

A splendid lunch was arranged at the Ritz Hotel, on Thursday, June 29th, and Viscount Templetown presided. The press printed glowing accounts of the great Exhibition to be held at Birmingham. And—*the bill for the lunch is still unpaid!*

Fielder then told his co-Directors that a "capitalist in Birmingham" would exchange a large number of debentures for cash. Wonderfully lithographed scrip was prepared, and the Committee in due course travelled to Birmingham to meet the "capitalist"—*who could not be found!*

Amongst others, Fielder obtained over £3,000 from a Mrs. Branscombe, of Birmingham, and several thousands from the gentlemen already mentioned. Much in connection with the ill-fated "Exhibition" is, like the Ritz Hotel lunch bill, unpaid for—not even the beautiful model of the "buildings" which graces the imposing offices at 33, Cavendish Square.

In spite of all these unsavoury facts, Fielder is still confidently telling people that the grand "Birmingham International Exhibition, 1923," will take place, and concealing the true state of affairs.

He recently endeavoured to get Lord Riddell to serve upon a committee. Mr. Fielder is at present living at 16, Sinclair Gardens, Shepherd's Bush.

TAX TYRANTS OF LIVERPOOL

Rank Injustice Behind a Legal Screen

EVEN-HANDED justice is a great ideal. The Liverpool Income - Tax Commissioners either do not believe in it or have not heard of it.

Recently they made an amazing regulation, that all income-tax-payers with over five hundred a year should have withdrawn from them the privilege of being assessed on the three years' average for the year 1921-22. This privilege has been theirs in practice for over forty years.

An inquiry into procedure was in progress; the Commissioners would not wait for that. An appeal was being taken to the House of Lords; the Commissioners would not wait for that. The Lords decided against the fiat of the Commissioners—but could not make them go back on their tracks.

As a concession to the House of Lords they allowed the privilege to those who had not appealed. Those who had appealed, and were found by the Lords to have been right in their appeal, were punished.

This is not justice: it is tyranny. The Lords of the Treasury must intervene. Sometimes injustice is inevitable. But when it is pointed out it must be remedied.

THE MORALS OF THE POLICE

What a Searching Inquiry Would Reveal

SCOTLAND YARD scoffs at the suggestion that there is to be a public or private inquiry into the efficiency of the Metropolitan Police Force, and asks us to believe that all is so well that such an investigation would be a studied insult to the men in blue and their plain clothes comrades.

It may be that the men in charge at the Yard believe what is said on their behalf, but we are quite sure that their smug self-satisfaction is not shared by the powers-that-be at the Home Office, and we are also sure that there is good reason for the alarm that is at present being manifested in high places regarding the police force, not only in London but throughout the country.

It is for that reason that there has been of late a great increase in the number of officers dealt with by their superiors for offences against discipline, in other words, for criminal practices that prove the men unfit to be policemen.

We would like to know how many men of all ranks have been dismissed from the Force or obliged to retire before their time for breaches of discipline involving relations with "the criminal classes."

We would like to know if it is not the case that there has been a great increase in the number of complaints from women of the street of police blackmail, and we would also like to know how many charges against such women have been withdrawn when it was found that their hearing would involve the investigation in public of allegations against the police.

We confess to a thirst for knowledge regarding the number of complaints made respecting thefts and other offences inside the Force that could only have been the work of comrades of the victims, and at the same time would like to be told the extent of the measures taken by the authorities against members of the police force charged with such offences. Also do we desire to know why charges of this nature should be dealt with as matters of discipline instead of being investigated in public.

The present control of the Metropolitan Force is the cause of grave unrest in the Force. Little wonder the public feel that there is more corruption, more collusion between criminals and the police, than ever before.

The need for a searching investigation into the relations between the public, the police and the criminal classes is so great, that should the Government department which is responsible delay in instituting such an investigation, it cannot be regarded as other than an ally of disorder and even crime.

"WICKEDNESS" of the MODERN GIRL

Cocktail Drinkers and Wasteful Idlers

by ARNOLD BENNETT

THE periodical attack on the modern girl has begun once more. It has occurred at least once already in the present century. It occurred in the eighteen-nineties. It was prosecuted with great vigour by the late Mrs. Lynn Linton in her "Girl of the Period" articles still earlier. And I doubt not that it was a fashionable pastime in the ancient city of Thebes in 1600 B.C.

We are now given to understand that girls drink cocktails, go out unchaperoned, and stay up too late, to the grave detriment of their bodies and their souls.

AS for the disappearance of the hard-shell chaperone, I hail it with satisfaction and wish it was more complete.

As for the relation between cocktails and girls, there are doubtless girls who habitually drink cocktails, just as there are girls who abstract money from collecting-boxes, but they are not numerous.

All persons, male or female, old or young, who habitually drink cocktails are behaving in a silly and reprehensible manner, and all are equally worthy of blame.

AS for staying up late and thereby impairing health, I perceive to-day no change for the worse. Go back to the writings of the lashers and whippers of society fifty years ago, and you will find exactly the same complaint of late hours.

That a few young women, well advertised in the fashionable news, do constantly and publicly conduct themselves very disreputably and unhealthily, I admit. They are not, however, in the least representative; and nobody condemns them more severely than their acquaintances.

It is as reasonable to charge the sins of this tiny minority against all modern girlhood, as it would be to argue that modern insurance-directors are scoundrels, that modern bank-directors are disgracefully unbusinesslike, and that the suburbs have fallen to be the haunt of murderers and adulterers, and no husband's life is safe therein.

ONE profound difference, however, does exist between the girls of the present and the girls of the past. There was in the past, as there is to-day, a caste of girls devoted *solely* to the pursuit of pleasure and self-adornment.

IN the past the existence of these wasteful idlers did not offend the conscience of the community. To-day it does offend the conscience of the community.

Every individual ought to be trained to serve some serious purpose in the community. In time those who fail to reach such a standard will be ostracised by decent people and they and their like will disappear.

"BROKEN BLOSSOMS"

A Warning to Parents

AN inquiry into the conditions under which scores, aye hundreds, of young girls are induced to go on tour as chorus hands in pantomimes is urgently needed.

At this very moment, in preparation for the Christmas pantomimes, unscrupulous agents and managers with hideous records are persuading innocent girls to sign agreements to go anywhere for wages so low that within a few weeks they are utterly at the mercy of their employers.

Girls who know, whisper about the doings of these men and warn beginners against accepting gifts from them. Something should be done at once to clear such creatures from the great profession they disgrace.

Then we would have fewer mothers' tears, aching hearts, and ruined lives, which mark the close of so many of these short tours.

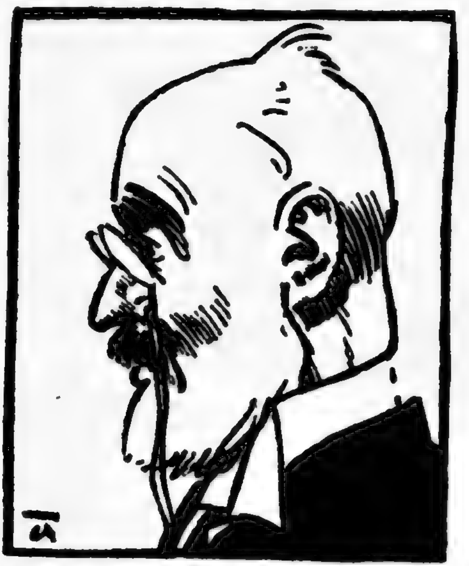
Even if girls manage to avoid the net spread by the men who employ them, they have still to cope with extreme poverty which so often drives them on to the streets.

Only legislation making the payment of a living wage and travelling expenses compulsory will effectively curb this evil.

SAINTS and SINNERS

Pen Portraits of Prominent People

by HESKETH PEARSON



Governor-General T. M. HEALY.

IF Parnell and Redmond were alive to-day they would greet the news with a loud guffaw. Tim Healy—the witty, sentimental, undependable, irritating, affectionate, delightful, impossible Tim—Governor-General of the Irish Free State!

The very idea, they would say, is unthinkable, laughable. This man of innumerable contradictions and countless absurdities, who is your sworn ally to-day and your mortal enemy to-morrow, who would be so lovable if he weren't so hateable, going to be the first Governor-General of——no, no, a thousand times NO! Parnell, Redmond and Company would advise you to tell them another. . . .

NOW and again in the course of a century the House of Commons is enriched by a real personality; and though the presence of such a curiosity adds to the gaiety of the nation, it cannot be said that the House, which is the natural home of dreariness and drowsiness, quite appreciates the honour. Two of these uncomfortable phenomena have helped to make the debates bearable to civilised folk during the last generation: Labouchere and Healy. And the latter was easily the bigger man of the two—because his heart was as large as his brain.

Mr. Healy has invariably been a dangerous opponent. But his supporters have sometimes feared him more than his avowed enemies. His leaders would exhaust all the arts of diplomacy to keep him quiet and docile, but this merely made him still more determined to have a dig at them.

"Really," they exclaimed, "he is possessed by the devil!"

They overlooked the simple fact that he was born to be a spur in the side of his contemporaries. Instead of humouring him, they took offence at his ironic pricks and did their level best to give tit-for-tat. Whereupon he would turn and rend them in a manner highly prejudicial to law and order.

NOR, apparently, did they realise that Tim's heart was too big for his body. And being endowed with a keen sense of the incongruous together with a remarkable talent for biting phrases, he used these gifts to mask an emotion that would otherwise have betrayed him With a little more sympathy they might have won from him a permanent and unswerving allegiance.

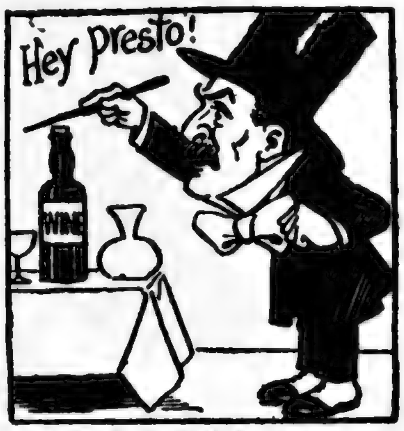
This intense sensitiveness and passionate earnestness of many Irishmen—so often disguised by a wild, hilarious humour—has never been properly understood in England. Hence we are still rather inclined to regard the Irish as children, in spite of the fact that they have given us the greatest satirist, the greatest politician, the greatest soldier, the greatest wit and philosopher in our history.

TIM HEALY has much in common with those five. Like them, he has been able to make his foes smart and tingle all over; and though his friends have shaken with mirth during the process, they have occasionally had to quit the chamber in silence lest he should suddenly take it into his head to turn the laugh upon themselves.

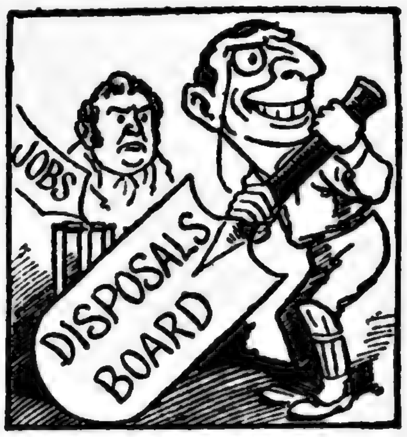
A good deal of hard executive work during the last few years has toned him down now. Parnell and Redmond would hardly recognise their devoted colleague and bitter antagonist.

CARTOONETTES

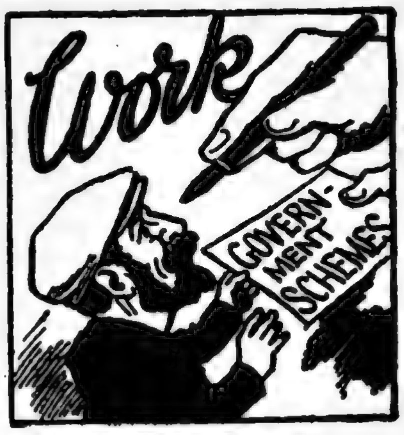
by FRANK HOLLAND



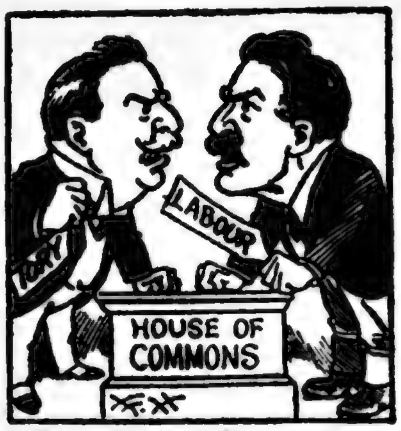
Our Prohibitionist M.P.
To Drink will give no quarter;
The miracle he wants to see
Is wine turned into water.



The wielders of this bat no doubt
May long defend their wicket,
It may be hard to bowl them out
But still—it isn't Cricket!



Too long the Coalition crowd
This problem tried to shirk,
And Bonar Law may well be proud
If he supplies the work.



Of late we've heard Westminster way
The war-drums distant rattle,
And very soon now, prophets say,
Will come the clash of battle.

Candid Communications

(Outspoken Messages to Celebrities, Notorieties and Occasionally Nonentities)

To the Rt. Hon. A. BONAR LAW,
Prime Minister.

SIR,—Nobody knows better than you do that the Report of the Honours Commission will be a hush-hush document. We have said so often enough, and we doubt very much indeed if the public will be any wiser after reading the report. Will you therefore consider the question of an open tariff for honours, so that Lord Paidwell and Sir Thomas Cashdown may benefit the taxpayers as well as themselves? Or would you agree that a peer who gets his title on the merits should have after it the letters S.R. (services rendered) and the peer who gets it for cash the letters F.P. (fully paid)? Then we shall all know exactly where we are. JOHN BULL.

To His Honour JUDGE CRAWFORD,
Romford County Court.

SIR,—It is certainly, as you say, scandalous how some people squander their money, but you might have found a more fitting opportunity to express this sentiment than by administering a sharp rebuke to a poor widow who asked for £15 from her Workmen's Compensation award for the purpose of burying her child. It is a melancholy satisfaction to the poor to avoid a shabby funeral for their loved ones, and your offensive accusation of extravagance shows lack of sympathy and understanding.
JOHN BULL.

To the Rt. Hon. W. C. BRIDGEMAN, M.P.,
Home Secretary.

SIR,—On the 23rd of this month the ban on the return of enemy aliens will lapse, and after that every one admitted will come in on your responsibility. There are already 270,000 aliens in this country, which is roughly over a quarter of a million too many, and with unemployment so terribly rife it is up to you to decrease this number and not add to it. See that you do your duty. JOHN BULL.

To Lady ASTOR, M.P.,
Westminster.

DEAR LADY ASTOR,—We are happy at last to find ourselves in agreement with you. You are right in saying that the people who work waitresses long hours and pay them five shillings a week are driving them to immorality. Some of these people regard themselves as highly respectable. Why not go further and let the public know their names and places of business. Take off the gloves; show them up; and good luck to you. JOHN BULL.

To J. T. W. NEWBOLD, Esq., M.P.,
Westminster.

SIR,—The Labour party is quite right not to send you their whips. Why should it recognise its worst enemy, the raucous Communist? You will learn a lot at Westminster: it will not all be palatable. JOHN BULL.

To HARRY LONGHORN,
Hull.

YOU BRUTE,—Because your whippet was beaten in a race you kicked the winning dog to death. You should be ashamed to enter the company of decent men, let alone sportsmen. For a month at least you cannot attempt to do so, while you serve your sentence. The poor dog could not retaliate; the law protects you from the kick of contempt you so thoroughly deserve. The howls of pain of that poor dying dumb creature ought to haunt you for the rest of your worthless life. JOHN BULL.

To the Rt. Hon. J. R. CLYNES, M.P.,
House of Commons.

DEAR MR. CLYNES,—According to the Russian Bolshevists you do not understand them. Nobody does. But we have seen the havoc they have wrought. Have nothing to do with them. Do not ask them to moderate their policy so as to help Labour here: the less you have to do with them the better you will be liked here. Can a man touch pitch and not be defiled? JOHN BULL.

To M. GEORGES CARPENTIER,
Paris.

DEAR GEORGES,—Why don't you stop your foolish and boastful campaign against Siki? That poor illiterate negro is going back to Senegal. Let him depart in peace. We don't want him in Europe, even if he is telling the truth when he says the match with you was squared. You were beaten. Take your beating like a man. Stop boasting. It is very distasteful from an ex-champion. In plain words—be a sport.
JOHN BULL.

To the Rev. F. B. MEYER, D.D.,
Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.

SIR,—You say you would thrash girls who ask for cocktails in restaurants—a truly chivalrous remark from a minister of religion! It aptly illustrates the sort of life we should live if England were run by people like you, narrow, bigoted and tyrannical. Actually your power is fortunately limited to idle vapourings, but you really should try to keep them within the bounds of decency. JOHN BULL.

To HENRY ALKIN,
Brighton.

SIR,—You were fined £4 and 30s. costs at Brighton for driving a car at break-neck speed. You were lucky not to be sent to jail. You have only one arm—having lost one through crashing into a motor-lorry. Several other motoring offences have been charged against you. Is it necessary for you to lose your remaining arm before we can regard our roads as safe for Democracy? JOHN BULL.

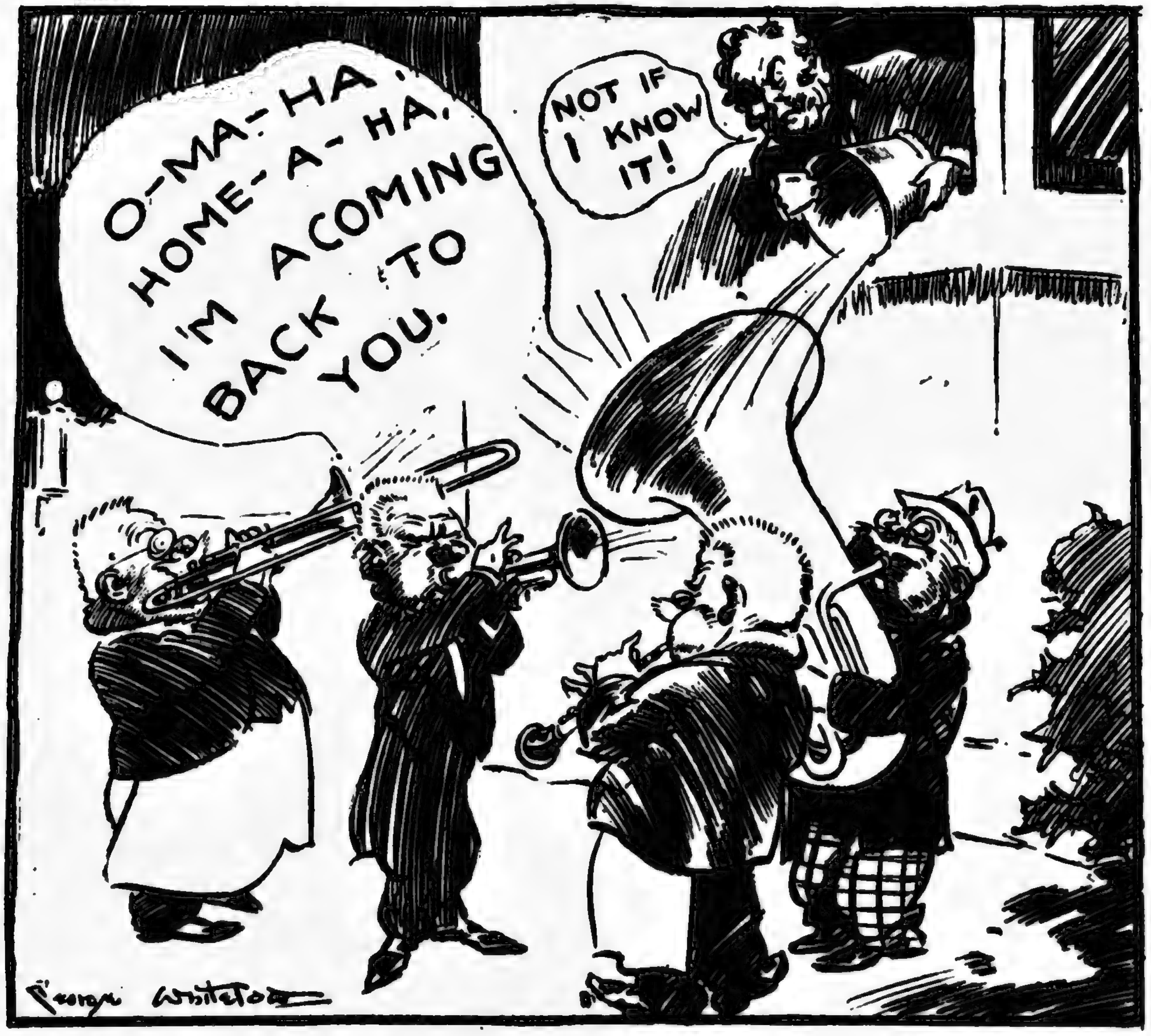
To ALDERMAN KENT,
Gosport.

SIR,—You are right in protesting against the action of a local schoolmaster, who gave his boy-pupils a demonstration election, used the names of real candidates, and then appeared and told the story at a local political meeting. Schoolmasters ought to be above party politics in school. They are in a position of trust and should avoid the criticism that they are seeking to make converts. JOHN BULL.

To Major BOYD-CARPENTER, M.P.,
Ministry of Labour.

SIR,—You tell us that the whole question of housing is under consideration. How quickly you have learned the official trick of evasion, and postponement, and dope. George Lansbury told you it had been under consideration for the last fifty years. Wake up. Winter is upon us. Get something done. JOHN BULL.

A BAND OF HOPE


O-MA-HA. HOME-A-HA. I'M ACOMING BACK TO YOU.
NOT IF I KNOW IT!
George Whitelaw

The Alien Restrictions Act (1919) expires on December 23 and there are 1,500,000 unemployed in this country.

Without Fear or Favour

The Editor's Views on Vital Topics

The Path of Peace

THE united front achieved by the Allies at the Lausanne Conference over the question of the Straits marks a definite step forward towards the pacification of Europe. Also, we will hope, it signalises a new departure in foreign politics.

For past misunderstandings neither Great Britain nor France has been solely to blame; there have been faults of temper on both sides and occasional lapses from good manners which are best forgotten. In his statement of policy on the eve of the polls, Mr. Bonar Law struck the right note in declaring that from now onwards friendship with France was to form the corner-stone of British policy, and it is the first fruits of this better understanding which have been reaped at Lausanne.

The visit of M. Poincaré to London to confer with the British Government upon the subject of German Reparations is another step in the right direction. It is idle to deny that there have been sharp differences between the Allies upon this vital question, but we decline to believe that any difficulty exists which need stand in the way of a joint programme backed by the whole force of public opinion on both sides of the Channel. The middle course is the safe one. Undue severity towards Germany may fling her into the arms of Russia, and thus create a new menace to the peace of Europe. Weak clemency on the other hand may cause her to forget the lessons of defeat and harbour projects of revenge.

It is the latter fear which obsesses the mind of France and occasionally blinds her to the wider economic considerations which are bound up with the problem of a lasting European settlement.

The situation calls for a broad and sympathetic understanding between the two countries, for clear and courageous thinking, for bold and constructive effort. The namby-pamby internationalism which would make us friends of every nation but our tried and trusted Ally has no popular backing in this country. We want to be friends with France, and it is the duty of British statesmanship to find a way.

Restore the Penny Post

THE new Postmaster-General, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, has a great opportunity. If he is wise and alert he will make it his settled aim to restore the penny post. That great institution, erected nearly a century ago by the foresight of Rowland Hill, has been sadly battered. The loss of cheap postage is part of the price we have paid for the war.

We believe, however, that with a little management and attention to sound principles it might soon be given back to us. For several years, owing to abnormal war conditions, there was a deficit on the Post Office accounts, but this year the estimated surplus of £9,000,000 is likely to be exceeded, and further reductions of postal charges should automatically follow. The Treasury must not be allowed to grab this surplus. It is not the business of the Post Office to make profits for the spending Departments to waste, and as long as the postal system pays for itself the strictest economist should be satisfied.

To talk of making the Post Office "pay," in the sense of producing revenue over and above its outgoings, is as wrong-headed as to suggest that Oxford Street should be made to pay. The one is a paved thoroughfare of trade and the other a living artery of commerce. Fortunate indeed are we if this essential means of communication entails no charge upon the taxpayer other than that which he pays in the ordinary way of postage, for without the Post Office many avenues of trade would be entirely closed. The swiftly delivered letter, the telegraph, the telephone are the nerves and sinews of modern business intercourse.

The Post Office exists for the convenience of the public, not the public for the profit of the Post Office. As soon as ever the present charges can be reduced an increased volume of postal matter will be carried, and even from the narrow revenue-producing point of view Mr. Neville Chamberlain will find that what he loses on the swings he will gain on the roundabouts. Added to this will be the gratification of knowing that an artificial hindrance has been removed from our reviving trade, and a new impetus given to certain branches of industry which have been grievously hampered by excessive postal imposts. Fortunately Mr. Chamberlain is a hard-headed man of business. We hope great things of him.

Judges and Juries

THE jury in the Bevan case did their duty straightforwardly and well. We are inclined to think they would have done it just as well without quite so much assistance from Mr. Justice Avory. As we have said many times before, this gentleman's long experience at the Treasury Bar was not the best of qualifications for the Bench, and in his judicial manner there is still too much of the bias apt to result from long years of practice as prosecuting counsel.

In the case just closed it did no particular harm, for no man was ever more certainly guilty of heartless fraud than Gerard Lee Bevan. Unfortunately, however, it is the growing habit of modern judges to sum up in a way which is in effect a direction to the jury as to what their verdict should be. In the Armstrong trial the resources of the prosecution were similarly reinforced by the skill and acumen of Mr. Justice Darling.

This innovation is one that needs careful watching. In certain cases it amounts to a usurpation of the powers of the jury, and we are old-fashioned enough to believe that the jury system, with all its faults, contains important safeguards for the liberty of the citizen.

It is the proper function of the Bench to direct the jury upon points of law and to explain the bearing of the evidence, but if a Judge goes beyond this and states conclusions which amount to findings of fact, he is clearly outside his legitimate province.

The British public will be ill advised to trust their lives and liberties to the unfettered judgment of the lawyers, who, though not so black as they are sometimes painted, have faults peculiarly their own.

The Empire Exhibition

SOME weeks ago we turned our searchlight upon the threatened fiasco of the British Empire Exhibition. At that time we were a voice crying in the wilderness, but, having been put on the scent by our revelations, the whole of the British Press has now taken up the hue and cry. So much the better. From the first we have had no other aim than to focus public attention upon a grave scandal and if possible to avert the failure of a great Imperial event.

As originally designed the British Empire Exhibition was meant to enshrine a principle. It was intended to demonstrate to the peoples of the Empire that within our own Imperial borders are produced all the necessities and nearly all the luxuries we need. This lesson, so vastly important to our British commerce, will be ill taught by the purchase of timber from the shores of the Baltic, essential foodstuffs from our rivals on the Continent of Europe, and of manufactured products from any country that has a bale of goods to sell.

It was towards some such ridiculous fiasco that the Management Committee were drifting when we ventured to recall them to a sense of their public duty, and not all the disclaimers of guileless honorary officers or frightened officials can alter the fact. We want the British Empire Exhibition to be a triumphant success. If order can be substituted for the existing chaos it should give an enormous fillip to the commerce of the Empire and go far to cement closer trade relations with the British Dominions.

But the first step is to get the organisation on to a proper footing, to cut away the undergrowth of waste, corruption and intrigue which hampers progress, and to replace the present rule-of-thumb methods by a practical ideal. All this means a clean sweep with a new broom. Since a vast sum of public money is involved and the failure of the scheme will entail a heavy burden upon the taxpayer, there must be a searching Government inquiry into the facts. There is not a moment to lose.

A Perilous Hazard

THE Parliamentary reappearance of Mr. Lloyd George last week was in the role of agricultural reformer. We will not stress the irony of the fact that the statesman who twelve years ago was promising us a new Heaven and a new earth, to the accompaniment of the "Land Song," should to-day be proclaiming the leanness of the land.

Undoubtedly British agriculture is in a sad plight, and it seems that the grim lessons of the war in regard to our food supply have not yet been learned. The growth of foodstuffs within our borders diminishes from year to year, while the exodus from the country to the towns continues unchecked.

The industrious farmer is harassed by a thousand difficulties, while the labourer lacks a living wage. Still, it appears, we mean to trust to luck. May it never desert us in the hour of need!

ERIN GO BRAGH!

by

A. G. GARDINER

WELL, the long struggle is over and Ireland is among the nations. It is as independent and as free as Canada or Australia or South Africa; and if there is freedom more complete and better guaranteed in the world than theirs, I do not know where we shall look for it. It is a sort of gilt-edged freedom, for it gives security without interference.

And now that Home Rule is accomplished and Dublin Castle is as dead a memory as the Bastille, is there one of us who does not openly or, at least, secretly rejoice? We feel like Christian when he had got rid of his burden, or like Sindbad when he had shaken off the Old Man of the Sea.

Ireland has been our Old Man of the Sea for seven centuries. We hoisted him on our back in Plantagenet days under the impression that we should be better oft and he would be better off if we carried him. There has never been such a mistake in history. The Old Man has been kicking and struggling to get off and we have been pummelling and thumping him to make him keep on. Not for a generation or two, but for century after century.

It has been a tragedy for Ireland, but it has been no less a tragedy for us. It has cost us millions of money, it has made enemies for us overseas, it has brought us nothing but trouble and shame.

And now the future is with Ireland. She has won her freedom and it remains for her to show that she can use it wisely. I think she will. I rejoiced to see that the Duke of Devonshire is satisfied that she means to try. She has a hard row to hoe. She has enemies in her midst to put down, but she will put them down in time, for the overwhelming mass of the people accept the settlement and want peace. We can safely leave them to deal with their own disorders. Please God, England will never spill blood on Irish soil again.

I have another hope. I hope that when in due time the Irish Free State is established and prosperous, when it has shown that it can govern wisely and act justly, as I believe it means to act, towards the minority within its borders, that then the people of Ulster and the people of the South will be reconciled and that by mutual consent they will agree to bury the dead past and face the future as a United Ireland, no longer a source of weakness to England, but a source of strength and mutual helpfulness.

It is not an extravagant hope. I believe that the miracle which the grant of self-government wrought in South Africa was not really a miracle, but the working of a natural law. Deny freedom and you reap trouble. Give freedom and you win friendship. It is cause and effect. It is the law of human affairs and it will operate in Ireland as it has operated wherever it has been applied under the British flag. And so we can say with confidence, God Speed to Ireland a Nation!

THE FIRES

by "A GENTLEMAN

(Author of "The Mirro

IS the British working-man being Communism or Bolshevism, thro utterances than on sound common se does not mince matters in this artic people. He issues a reasoned war confidence in "M.P.s for Mos

WHEN I read in my newspaper that Mr. Newbold had sent a telegram to Lenin with the announcement that he had *won Motherwell for Moscow* I permitted myself to wonder whether he might not be known to Mr. Speaker, if not to history, as the first member for Colney Hatch.

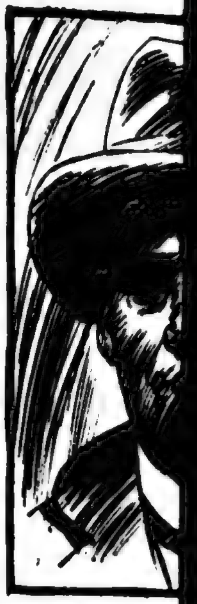
But when I saw a photograph of this gentleman, and observed the scowling brow, the high cheekbones, the small quarrelsome eyes, and the fiercer lips swollen with anger and intensest pride, I realised that here was no clown of the hustings, no Mad Hatter out of Wonderland, but, rather, a striking and impressive specimen of the authentic firebrand—a genuine fanatic as completely inspired by dangerous hate as Plato by wisdom or Shakespeare by common sense.

MEN of this distorted and inhuman mentality have brought the simple and pliable millions of Russia into a state of starvation, pestilence and ruin. They are, consciously or unconsciously, nihilists. Lenin does not love humanity: he hates it. Such men will have harder work to bring about the downfall of our more stable British prosperity; but give them time, ignore them, or merely abuse them, and what they have done on the Clyde they will yet do in many other parts of our British Islands.

They are dangerous, not on account of their Communism or their Socialism, but because of their burning hatred of all superiority and excellence, and because of their genius for creating anger, fury, and revolutionary madness in vast masses of suffering humanity. There is at the moment no menace of Socialism: but there is a genuine menace of anarchy. No one could rouse the people of this country to set up a new economic order; but firebrands might easily persuade a section of the people to attempt smashing the present order.

JUST as a wise physician continually suggests to his patient that he is better, that he is recovering his strength, that he will soon be up and about again, so these wicked destroyers of national peace as continually suggest to the least intelligent and the most hard-pressed citizens of the state that their condition is a crime. They fasten into the dull and passive minds of our worst mob elements the "fixed idea" that "the People" are being daily wronged and daily oppressed, and that only by the extreme violence of a political upheaval can they fling off the wicked and inhuman monsters who grow rich on their degrading slavery.

NO man of ordinary education finds difficulty in meeting the economic arguments of the Socialist. But who is to meet the flaming rhetoric of a truly inspired Hammer of Satan whose whole mind is set, not upon constructing a better order of society, not upon increasing the wealth of the world, not on extending the benefits of education, refinement, and domestic science, but solely on heightening and intensifying the sense of misery in those who are most miserable, most helpless, and most hopeless?


Mr. J. T. W.

Great as the difficulty is, those who live by reason should not fear to confront it. They might well begin by facing the situation in Motherwell. A man of courage and common sense should be found, preferably a manufacturer or an intelligent trade unionist, to conduct at once a crusade of enlightenment in his constituency, so that when the next election comes Motherwell may not again be won for Moscow—if Moscow then exist. Courage will be needed, courage of the highest order, for the propaganda of hatred and discontent can be counteracted only by the propaganda of coldest truth.

INSTEAD of flattering the sullen millions by making them feel that their misery is caused by others, the protagonist of truth will have to tell them face to face that they themselves are the chief cause of their unhappiness.

No diplomatic wheedling and no adroit sycophancy can rouse these deluded people out of their dangerous torpor. No incense must be burned before the shrine of their false gods. They must be told the hard and wounding truth that such is their economic value, and such their mental and spiritual qualities, that, like the vast majority of us, they can hope to keep body and soul together on this unsentimental planet only by most loyally and gratefully associating their domestic fortunes with the commercial fortunes of greater minds—the minds of the masters, of men who have talent.

They must learn that they have largely brought their troubles on themselves by listening to tomfool firebrands and opposing at every turn the very men who can give

THE Editor does not necessarily share t of sufficient interest and importance viewspaper the recognised platform for the fr

OF REVOLT

WITH A DUSTER”

Downing Street,” etc.)

loited by the avowed advocates of agitators who rely more on hectic The “Gentleman with a Duster” He talks plain language to plain against the placing of too much ” and others of their kidney.

OLD, M.P.

them work; that the miner by flooding the mines, and the engineer by downing tools at the instant word of any irresponsible agitator, have so baffled and disheartened the master-minds of Great Britain that no conscientious capitalist will now advise a friend to invest his savings in industry.

They must be taught to see, these dregs of our noble working-classes, that they have shaken the whole fabric of industrial security. They must be made to realise that no prosperity is possible for them, or for anybody else, so long as the creative minds in our midst, the few benefactors whose genius in organisation can alone give strength and power to British industry, are sick to deathof Labour upheavals, and feel that they can put no trust either in the common sense or the pledged word of the British workman. Only the fool built his house on sand. The wise man looked for a rock.

There is another line of attack on such strongholds of discontent as that of Motherwell. Side by side with the intellectual attack should go a moral and spiritual attack. Too many people in this country are not only nursing grievances and brooding on what they call their wrongs; they are ing with no clear conviction of their moral sponsibilities.

A MAN who is out of work, and who has children dependent upon him, has no ght to pay money for the pleasure he derives om luxuries. His duty is to save every thing for his children, as the struggling erman worker is doing.

Thrift, which the fanatics of Communism nounce as a vice, has ever been the disguishing characteristic of every moral vival, and perhaps it is by a great and arching moral revival that we can most pefully set about the work of saving these luded people from following the way of lf-indulgent destruction. They are inllectually dense because they are morally ind. Science is a closed look to them. Literature is a closed book to them. Music is a closed book to them. Nature itself is a closed book to them. They suffer in the twentieth century this terrible and impoverishing deprivation because they deny the Socratic advice of “caring for their souls.”

ASK any good workman who has taken pains to educate his mind, and who lives thriftily and decently, and who is never long out of work, and even then has savings at his back and a good allotment to employ his time—ask such a one whether it is not true that the average working-man is absolutely careless of his soul—that he lives entirely in the world of animal satisfactions.

How can such a man face sorrow, how can he meet disaster, how can he protect himself against the flattering oratory of a black-souled Bolshevist? *How can he feel his duties like a knife at his heart?*

Again, if this menace of anarchy is to be met, I am persuaded that with a moral revival and an intellectual crusade there must also go a far more generous measure of sympathy and neighbourliness into the dark places of our crowded cities.

NO moral revival can hope to endure the scoffs and taunts of the bitter-minded and atheistical youth of the present generation which is not accompanied by a great and powerful tide of sincere helpfulness and sincere neighbourliness on the part of those who possess what poverty must needs covet and what misery finds it so difficult not to hate.

Great work, work beyond all praise, is being done by the intelligent staff in factories whose duties lie in what is called the Welfare Section; an enormous change in this respect has taken place during the last ten years; but there is no real sense in the community, no living feeling in the nation at large, that we are all members one of another, and that there are few more urgent duties on this earth than ministering to the sad and the sorrowful, than enlightening the foolish and the ignorant. But the real remedy lies with the people themselves.

LET the dim millions, as Carlyle called them, silence the parasitical agitation in their midst, and give to capital a sense of absolute security, and to the nation a conviction of unquestionable loyalty; let this be done, let peace succeed war, let tranquillity succeed upheaval, and industry will speedily get upon its feet, and surely, even as a means of investing money, slums will be swept away, and a new and worthier city come into existence.

Mr. Newbold can do nothing but deepen depression and strengthen unreasonable anger. The workers themselves, merely by a new spirit, can make the future easier, brighter and more rational, for their children.

expressed on this page, but considers them publication. It is intended to make this of the leading topics of the day.

THE MARKET PRICE OF POLITICIANS

by

HAROLD OWEN.

IT is rumoured that the new Scoto-Communist cohort in the House of Commons are rather inclined to think that £400 a year is “fair redeeculous” for an M.P.'s salary, and the “suggestion” put forth is that £1,000 a year would meet the case.

It seems a modest expectation when compared with what might be yielded by a full realisation of the Socialist or Communist programme, which does not stop till it reaches the final “reform” of the complete transference of Capital from those who have it to “the workers,” their heirs, assigns, or Parliamentary representatives.

But the first practical objection to it is that it comes just too late, for we now have a Government which, whatever faults it may subsequently develop, so far shows no disposition whatever to spend money that isn't there on objects that are not strictly necessary.

And it comes too late for another reason. The tendency to-day is to look very critically indeed at all processes which may professionalise politics. Indeed, if our House of Commons were to cost us half a million a year for the salaries of private Members alone, John Bull would begin to ask himself whether parliamentary government was not becoming a luxury beyond both his means and his temper. He would also begin to make odious comparisons between the efficiency of the unpaid Parliaments and those we have had since that casual afternoon when the House of Commons put itself on the Estimates.

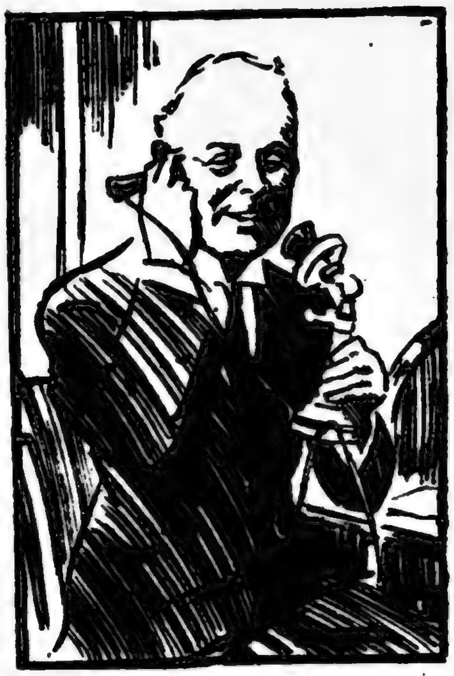
There is another reason why. You cannot very well standardise the value of parliamentary services, or meet the objection that whereas very few M.P.s indeed would be worth a thousand a year, there would be some who would be worth a thousand a year only if they promised to resign forthwith. In short, there *are* politicians who would be dear at any price.

That is the discovery which the Greeks made. They were roundly condemned for their execution of ex-Prime Ministers; but, after all, they could plead extenuating circumstances. Let us by all means sympathise with the victims of the executions, but let us also sympathise with the purpose of those who condemned them; the reassertion of the forgotten doctrine of the solemn responsibility of politicians.

There is literally no limit to the mischief that politicians may do, and therefore all ages have justified the penalty of death for supreme crimes against the State. Even the mistakes of statesmen have tragic consequences, but their crimes may involve whole peoples in misery. In such cases, some punishment is needed more terrible than the ballot, if less terrible than the bullet, can inflict. Similarly, if M.P.s want a thousand a year for “serving their country,” we must be allowed to bring counter-claims against them when they *don't*.

Bevan's Bevy of Beauties

IT is not our habit to kick men when they are down. In this intimate article no one, by any stretch of imagination, can justly accuse us of doing so. We said what we had to say in condemnation of this man months ago. So far as his dealings with women are concerned, however, Gerard Lee Bevan deserves no sympathy. He is shown here to have been their dupe and they took full advantage of his big weakness.



LANGUISHING in gaol with the knowledge that seven years must pass before he is again a free man, Gerard Lee Bevan, ex-chairman of the City Equitable Fire Insurance Co., will miss many things. Particularly he will miss the company of the women on whom he spent so much of his money.

Like not a few men who have figured in the Criminal Courts, Bevan was not the individual to overlook a fair share of pleasure making. The dry-as-dust features of some of his mammoth business deals, and the nerve wearing responsibilities associated with others, he now and then strove to forget in the company of fair enslavers.

There are few countries and scarcely a city in Europe in which he has not at some time or other contracted an amour. Bevan was susceptible to the charms of women to an extent never brought out in his trial. A woman had only to smile at him and his heart was at her feet. Sufficient evidence was given at the Old Bailey to show this, but only facts relevant to the charges against him could be admitted, so many of his harum scarum experiences remained to be revealed.

It is not generally known, for instance, that now that Bevan is in prison, there is a certain English actress, fair of feature, vivacious in manner, who will have to look elsewhere when short of a new fur coat.

Judging by the largesse which he displayed in the matter of presents to this footlight fairy, the luckless financier must have regarded her with feelings bordering on violent attachment.

And then there was Mlle. Pertuisot; the lady who fled with the defaulting Gerard to vistas less depressing and climes less rigorous. Not even Bevan's dearest friend could deny that this woman enslaved his affection in a manner which might justly lead one to dub him a fool.

But let it not be supposed the attachment is all on one side. In a certain residence of the Champs d'Elysees these last few days, there has been much shedding of tears, for if the beautiful woman there resident is young enough to be Bevan's daughter, she is still mightily attached to the fallen financier. At least, so she says.

Her affection for him, however, did not debar her from allowing him to squander his money recklessly and to lavish upon her the most costly gifts money could buy. Parisian frocks, expensive furs, bonbons de luxe, jewels, and rare curios, all found their way via Bevan to the object of his infatuation.

Bevan liked to think that women loved him. They liked him no doubt — chiefly because he was wealthy and ready to throw his money about, but it is well known to his intimates that behind his back, they laughed at him.

Naturally, even young women voted him a " good sort," entertaining, free and easy. They liked his conversation, his jokes, but most of all his money. They admired his spruce appearance, his sprightly manners, his generosity. So long as Jerry had a good time, good music, fetching company, he was only too happy to foot the bill.

He was almost constantly behind the scenes at the theatres of London, Brussels and Paris, eagerly pursuing the women who had ensnared him. The favourite of the moment was installed in state at the most expensive hotel in the European capital that happened to attract him at the moment.

Although he was known to his friends as a stern art critic, in the life he lived among the women on whom he lavished the money derived from his many ventures he was the easy dupe of make-up and artifice that would scarcely have done credit to frequenters of the London Suburban " Piccadillys."

Occasionally he had under his protection young girls of real beauty but in the main his mistresses were of the type indicated above. They had only to state their requirements to have them gratified. It was nothing for him to spend on one shopping expedition in Paris one hundred thousand francs., and his parting gifts were on an equally generous scale.

One of his pensioned favourites was a star of the Paris Opera, another was for a time the rage with the theatre-going young bloods of Brussels. Both women claim that their association with Bevan was easily worth ten thousand a year to them, and when they happened to be the ladies-in-waiting during his living in state in Brussels or Paris they could always count on supplementing that sum by lavish gifts of jewellery.

Though Bevan expected his fate he did not imagine it would be as severe as it proved to be.

" I expect it will be three years," he said in one of his frequent talks in prison under remand.

When the actual sentence was pronounced it seemed that it did not move him, but in reality those who were near enough saw him quail perceptibly, and though by sheer will power he was able to hide his feelings, his mastery of himself lasted only until he was out of the gaze of the public. The severity of the sentence then obviously dismayed him.

" It is terrible to think of it," he commented. " A life time in prison, for it is that to me. If I allow my mind to dwell on it too much I shall go mad."

Another trait of the luckless financier was his passion for antiques. In this line he was quite a connoiseur. In his office in Cornhill alone he had several thousand pounds worth of antiques of one kind or another; his very letters were dictated from a valuable Louis XIV. chair.

He was a man who counted friends in every walk of life, but especially among the opulent and powerful. It is calculated he was on speaking terms with half the members of the Upper House. Many Cabinet Ministers were glad to call him friend.

Brilliant speaker as Bevan unquestionably was, there were occasions when he regarded words as out of place. On one occasion, hustling along the pavement in the neighbourhood of the Exchange, he came into violent collision with the boot stand, and other paraphernalia of a bootblack. Before the man could ejaculate an appropriate swearword the offender had whipped out a sovereign, and tossed it to him.

This is characteristic of the man. Utterly reckless extravagance, a complete contempt of money unless in huge sums, and an unbounded conceit which blinded him to the sneers and jeers of those who pandered to him.

He is eccentric, too, and in his City life had several fixed habits which clung to him with an odd tenacity. In Cityland it is the commonest thing to meet all kinds of wealthy men strolling about in the vicinity of their offices, innocent of headgear, but among these Bevan was not to be rated. He would have no sooner appeared on the pavement outside his office without a topper and umbrella, than without his coat and waistcoat. He wouldn't have walked from No. 1, Cornhill, as far as the Bank without that silk hat clapped well on his head, his hands behind his back, his umbrella practically trailing behind.

Bevan never forgot a face—particularly a pretty face—and he never made the common and embarrassing mistake of calling a girl by another girl's name. In this sense, at least, he was the perfect lover.

The plain fact of the matter is, of course, that his City training, his genius for figures, and his natural prowess had developed his memory to a quite wonderful extent.

The following little annecdote is proof of this. A couple of members of the Stock Exchange were once having an altercation as to who won the Test Match about twenty years previously. The altercation was at its height when Bevan arrived on the scene.

" Here's Jerry," cried Number One.

" The very man," echoed Number Two, and straightaway they buttonholed the newcomer. Bevan whipped out his note-book, jotted down from memory the names of the players in the game under discussion, the names of the skippers and bowlers, each man's score, the total number of runs by which the match was won (by which means he was able to calculate the number of byes), and tearing the page from his note book handed it to the disputants.

His notes were compared with the *actual record* of the game, and it was discovered that Bevan was not out in a solitary particular!

The spectacle of so great a mind rotting behind prison-bars is pitiable, nauseating, terrible. Yet it is a spectacle which cannot be described as new. And after all it is not so tragic as the picture of poverty which faces so many of the people he defrauded.

Human Documents

Problems that may be yours are dealt with by our great contributor "Humanist." In every case the name and address of the writer is suppressed, and the letters have been slightly altered so that the authors may not be identified.

A Good Woman

"ELEVEN and a-half years ago my mother let one of her rooms to a seemingly nice young woman till her baby was born. They came to the understanding that the girl was going back to her work for about six months and then to be married, and that my mother would keep the baby for that time. Alas, she left our house about three weeks after the baby (a little girl) came, and we never saw her again. Then mother had a serious illness, which left her a semi-invalid for about eight years. I had to go out to my work and come home and scrub and clean to make things easier and nicer for mother, but while others were out enjoying themselves and meeting and making friends, I had no time. Now, at 35 years, I am alone, for my mother died eleven months ago, and with a little girl of 11 years to keep.

"I was employed nearly all the war time at and was kept on till almost the last batch, but that is nearly two years now, and I cannot get another job where I can get home at night. I could get domestic service, but it means I would have to leave the bairn, who has never known another mother. I just feel I could not do it. I nursed and reared her from infancy, and she is as dear to me as if she was my own, and it would break her little heart. I do some sewing, but as I am only an amateur, I don't make much.

We have not always a fire and enough to eat, but we have never starved. Folks seem to think that, because the bairn isn't really mine, I should put her in a charity home and look after myself, but I think because she has neither father nor mother (practically speaking) I have all the more need to guard and love her."

"HUMANIST" *says: The writer is a Scotswoman, and her letter speaks for itself. Here we have another splendid instance of self-sacrifice. Again we see the poor helping the poor, and a girl putting aside all that makes life worth living to some women, in order to devote her love and strength to the well-being of a child who has no claim upon her. I have only to tell Scottish readers that this woman lives near Hamilton for one or many of them to give her an opportunity of working for her bairn.*

Tragedy of a Wife

"I HAVE been married — years — to the wrong man. It would fill pages to write of all my grievances; they are all in themselves so overwhelmingly petty and sordid. Could you perhaps understand, dear 'Humanist,' when I say that my husband is a morose, sullen recluse? He goes to business, comes home and eats his meals, then sleeps. When he speaks at all, he is brutally sarcastic, and cynical towards life and everyone in general. We have a daughter, towards whom he is sublimely indifferent, if not furiously angry.

He lives in a world of his own, and is indifferent to our existence. At times, when I kick against the awfulness, the loneliness of it all, and remind him how entirely different we are to other people, he storms and swears, and dares me to again make comparisons. I'm certain this appears very ordinary and commonplace to you, but if you could only know the despairing heartache I perpetually have, the awful longing for human kindness, the intense, burning desire to be just natural.

"I wonder, oh! how intensely I wonder, if some of us were sent into the world merely to be unhappy."

"*Humanist*" *says: There are some tragedies which beget tragedies and have no solution. There are refinements of cruelty which women are called upon to endure far worse than the beatings which are a feature of the slums. Here is a case of a woman who might be easily and glibly described as a neurotic. In truth, she is nothing of the sort. She is as much a sufferer as one who receives a daily flogging. There is no advice possible but "hold on." Never be sorry for yourself. Keep that scrap of advice in mind. Never nurse your miseries. Keep your face to the light.*

The Man who Can't Marry

"MY age is 26 years. When I left my parents, who live at——, I promised them I would take care of myself and never get married, so that I could look after them when they were older, and my sister, who is mentally deficient. I shall always try to keep my promise, but lodgings are not a bit like home; sometimes I have to go out when I have nothing to do, and nowhere to go. There have been girls with whom I felt myself getting too friendly and had to avoid. Then I met, at a party, another girl, and find that I love her dearly, and she feels the same for me, and I know her parents cannot object to me as a son-in-law. I go to their house every minute I have to spare, and they all treat me like their brother or son.

"What can I do?"

"HUMANIST" *says: Parents have no right to extract so unmoral a promise from a man. It is your duty to live a perfectly natural life and to marry. Get in touch with your parents' priest and ask him to use his influence to bring them to an unselfish way of looking at things. As to your sister, she* OUGHT *to be in a good institution, and I should have that in my mind if I were you.*

The Child he Hates

"IN 1914 I left my little home to fight for King and Country, leaving behind me a young wife and baby girl. I was sent to the Far East, and while there I received news that my wife had given birth to a child.

"When I got home I forced the name of her betrayer from her; then I visited the man and thrashed him. How well I remember him as he staggered, bruised and bleeding, to his feet and said with a grin: 'It's worth the fun I've had!'

"I then became reconciled again with my wife, provided her and the baby with a home. She has been all that man could wish for since. But the baby grows more like the father every day, and how I hate it! Even in its baby smile I can see the smirk of its father.

"I cannot trust myself alone with it. Yet I won't leave my wife.

"I'm only human; I know it's not the baby's fault, and I've fought so hard to do the right thing. Can you help?"

"HUMANIST" *says: You are no man if you hate a baby for its parents' fault. Look into yourself and you'll see hurt vanity behind your anger. Why you went back to your wife I don't know—you're one of those "half-forgivers" that are worse than the bad because they're weak. The poor little kid can't help his mother's fault, and having taken your wife and her child back to live with you, you ought to be ashamed of yourself to hate this baby, who has certainly as much right to live as you have. Be big.*

***ONE GUINEA* will be awarded each week to the sender of the best Human Document. This week's winner:**

"A GOOD WOMAN."

From Comfort to Poverty

"THE outbreak of the war found me a happy married man, with a good job, a good home, and the proud father of a baby boy. Needless to say, I went with the 'crowd,' for had I not a home protect?

Then came the evil day in 1916, when I was taken prisoner. My wound caused me to lose my memory, and I am given to understand that for over eight months I was a hopeless mental wreck. Thanks to an operation and treatment at a German 'lazarette' in Le Quesnoy, I regained my sensibility and, of course, my first thought was to write home and assure my wife that I was still in the land of the living. A short time after this I was transferred to a Prisoner of War Camp in Fontine-le-Veque, and our daily task was chiefly repairing roads. And so the time dragged on. Not a line from home, and the anguish and misery which this absence of news caused me, was even greater than all the hardships and privations of our prison camp life.

"The glad Armistice came, and after many irritating delays, I found myself a free man, sailing across the Channel to rejoin my loved ones at home. More letters and a telegram were despatched from the Connaught Barracks, Dover, where I was confined for over a week. December 11th, 1918, found me, at a very late hour, standing on my own doorstep, knocking for admittance. Strangers opened the door, and, wild with excitement, I rushed in. As I glanced round the room, I realised that this was not my home. Then all went blank.

"I next found myself in hospital. Kindly neighbours, who knew me in the old days, came and visited me, and from them I gradually learned the story of my wife's unfaithfulness and her flight with her lover (a munition worker). My friends, through correspondence and other means, got the news that my wife had gone to Newcastle, and I learned about the same time of the death of my boy, who died with influenza.

"God only knows how I suffered. It pains me, even now, to think of it. I have been in hospital almost ever since. But Time surely is the healer of all things, and thanks to the splendid care and treatment at the different institutions, I am now well on the road to recovery.

"And now, dear 'Humanist,' comes my problem. While at ——— Hospital I was introduced to a young woman, whom I now regard as my dearest friend. Although she does not know my story, I somehow realise that her womanly heart has made her understand something of my sufferings. I sincerely believe that her sympathy and kindliness has been a great factor towards my recovery. She has given me hope and ambition, and, above all things, she has restored my faith in womankind. I have grown to love her very dearly, and under ordinary circumstances, I feel sure that I could make her happy. But I dare not tell her my story, because I am not free. I hate the idea of a divorce, because I have been brought up as a good Roman Catholic, and my faith is very dear to me. If I have to put her out of my life, I fear that the old trouble will come on me again, with the grim prospect of ending my days in some mental institution.

"I am at my life's cross-roads. What am I to do? Please advise me?":—

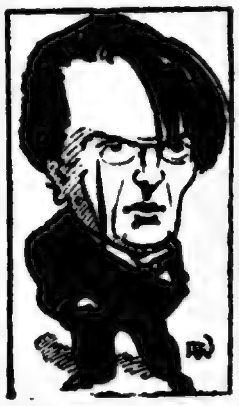
"*Humanist*" *says: You cannot ruin the life of a good woman, even to maintain your conception as to what is a good Catholic. You must either divorce your wife, or you should leave the other girl severely alone. You have suffered terribly, as other unhappy men have suffered, but even suffering past or to come cannot excuse the crime of deceiving an innocent woman who loves you. If your faith is dear to you, then live up to it. It is not the act of a good Catholic to deceive others, but rather to make further sacrifices. I advise you to see your priest.*

Poets in Politics

by HARRISON OWEN

Say, Paddy dear, an' have ye heard the news that's goin' round?
In Southern Ireland's Parliament two poets have been found!
If in the House of Commons we could get a few, in time
Debates, though poor in reason, might, at least, be rich in rhyme.

YOU have seen, of course, that two very famous poets (Mr. W. B. Yeats and Mr. George Russell) have been made members of the Irish Free State Senate? Long may they live to enjoy the wearin' o' the green bays that deck their brows!

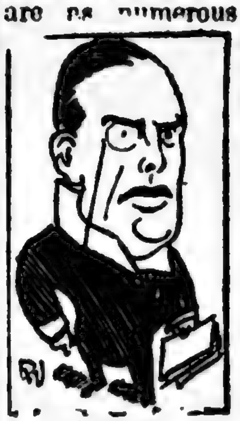

W. B. YEATS.

But what is the Mother of Parliaments going to do about it? If a debate in the Free State Senate is going to resolve itself into a contest between poets—a sort of Battle of the Bays—we English can scarcely rest content with the kind of Parliamentary debate which is often merely a battle of brays.

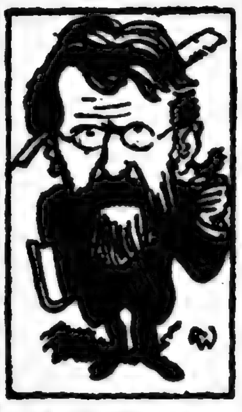
Many innovations have lately been introduced at Westminster, so why should we not have another? During the South Portsmouth by-election Captain Leslie Wilson might seize the opportunity of making a poetical reply to Lord Birkenhead's charge that he deserted his former leader (Mr. Austen Chamberlain) in an hour of crisis. Taking a hint from Richard Lovelace, the gallant captain could explain:

True, a new master now I serve,
A new "Law" I obey;
But do not think I lost my nerve
Because I ran away.
Though my inconstancy is such
As "F.E." may deplore,
I swear I once loved Austen much—
But love I "Bonar" more!

This might set a new fashion in political oratory, so that instead of hearing so much about "Georgian poetry" we might be able to sample the Lloyd-Georgian brand. L.-G. was born in a country where bards are as numerous as "beavers" among the Druids, so he should be able to toss a stave. F'rinstance:

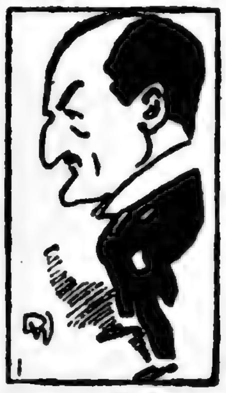

AUSTEN.

Though "Wales for ever best" is still
My motto, I don't wish
The Wee Free "whales" to swallow me
Like that immortal fish
That swallowed poor old Jonah.
I am willing to agree
To Liberal re-union
With the freest of the "Wee."
So long as I am at the helm
Where'er our vessel sails,
Then all discord will vanish like
The mountain mists of Wales.


MR. G. RUSSELL.

Really, there is much to be said for the precedent set in Ireland. Poets, we are told, are born, not made; so why should they not be borne in the House of Commons? It might go farther and fare verse.

If the Poet Laureate were given a seat he might break his long silence and do something to earn his tun of canary wi Anyway, I cannot see why poetry and politics should not mix. Why should we not seek to establish a new Poets' Corner at Westminster below the gangway? Where there is so much "gas" surely there could be no objection to a little "metre"?


COL. L. WILSON.

Printers' Pie . . .

(Half-a-crown is paid to the sender of every item published. Envelopes must be marked "Pie.)

"LINCOLNSHIRE ECHO":—"Half the ceiling of the Council Chamber fell with a great crash, but UNFORTUNATELY no one was in the room at the time."

"YEOVIL LEADER" (advertisement):—"Pram (unused), £7 10s., WORTH £2."

"HIGH PEAK NEWS":—"Owing to the RECENT DEATH OF THE BRIDEGROOM, the wedding was of a quiet character."

"YORKSHIRE TELEGRAPH AND STAR"—"Mrs. Emily Douglas . . celebrated her HUNDREDTH birthday in March last. . . . Mrs. Douglas came to reside at Sheerness 80 YEARS AGO, WHEN SHE WAS 97."

"NOVEL MAGAZINE":—"With his right FOOT he took up a pen, asked for the blotting-pad to be placed on his knee, dipped the pen in the ink, and wrote his signature in a firm, flowing HAND."

"PENDLETON REPORTER":—"He also struck her in the mouth and BURST ONE OF HIS LIPS in aiming a clothes brush at her."

"REYNOLDS'S SUNDAY NEWSPAPER":—"Her father, it is said, fought against NAPOLEON at Waterloo and BALACLAVA."

"STAR":—"Trade cannot revive, and EMPLOYMENT CANNOT BE ABOLISHED, until wasteful adventures of this sort are abandoned."

THE 25s. FAMILY

Lifted from the Shadows into the Sunshine

ONLY those who have themselves tasted the bitter dregs of the cup of poverty can appreciate to the full all that the "Greatest of These" Fund accomplishes in lightening the burden of tired souls to whom life has become a dreary pilgrimage.

Week by week we receive moving appeals for assistance telling in simple language the anguish of lives in the clutches of despair. Week by week, too, we receive touching expressions of gratitude showing how hope has sprung anew in those despairing hearts, and how they have been inspired with fresh courage to continue the uneven struggle for existence.

A broken-hearted woman wrote to us in her extremity. Her husband, weakened in the war, had been able to work only two months out of eighteen. There were two children, one a delicate little girl of two years and eight months, the other a little boy of seventeen months. The man's aged grandmother was also dependent upon him, and the total income of the family was 25s. 3d. a week, of which 10s. 8d. was absorbed by the rent.

Even with the exercise of the greatest economy they were half starved, and unavoidably got into arrears with the rent. The landlord gave them notice to quit, and in spite of the poor woman's pleadings, threatened to eject them unless at least £3 was at once forthcoming.

Almost everything they had had been sold or pawned, including the bedclothes and the husband's only decent suit, so that he had to wear his workman's overalls to hide his rags. The woman's wedding ring was a forfeited pledge, and the children's perambulator had been sold for 6s. for food.

By selling most of the furniture that remained they managed to raise sufficient to satisfy the landlord, and sat in their bare rooms in despair.

We were able to afford them assistance from the fund. The poor soul's gratitude is pathetic in its intensity.

They regard it as possibly the turning in the long lane of their pilgrimage, a sign that they may presently emerge from the shadows into the sunshine.

Help us to lift others out of the slough of despond and face life anew.

"The Greatest of These—"

(Registered under the War Charities Act as the JOHN BULL *War Sufferers' Fund. All cheques should be made payable to the Fund, and donations addressed to the Hon. Secretary, at 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.)*

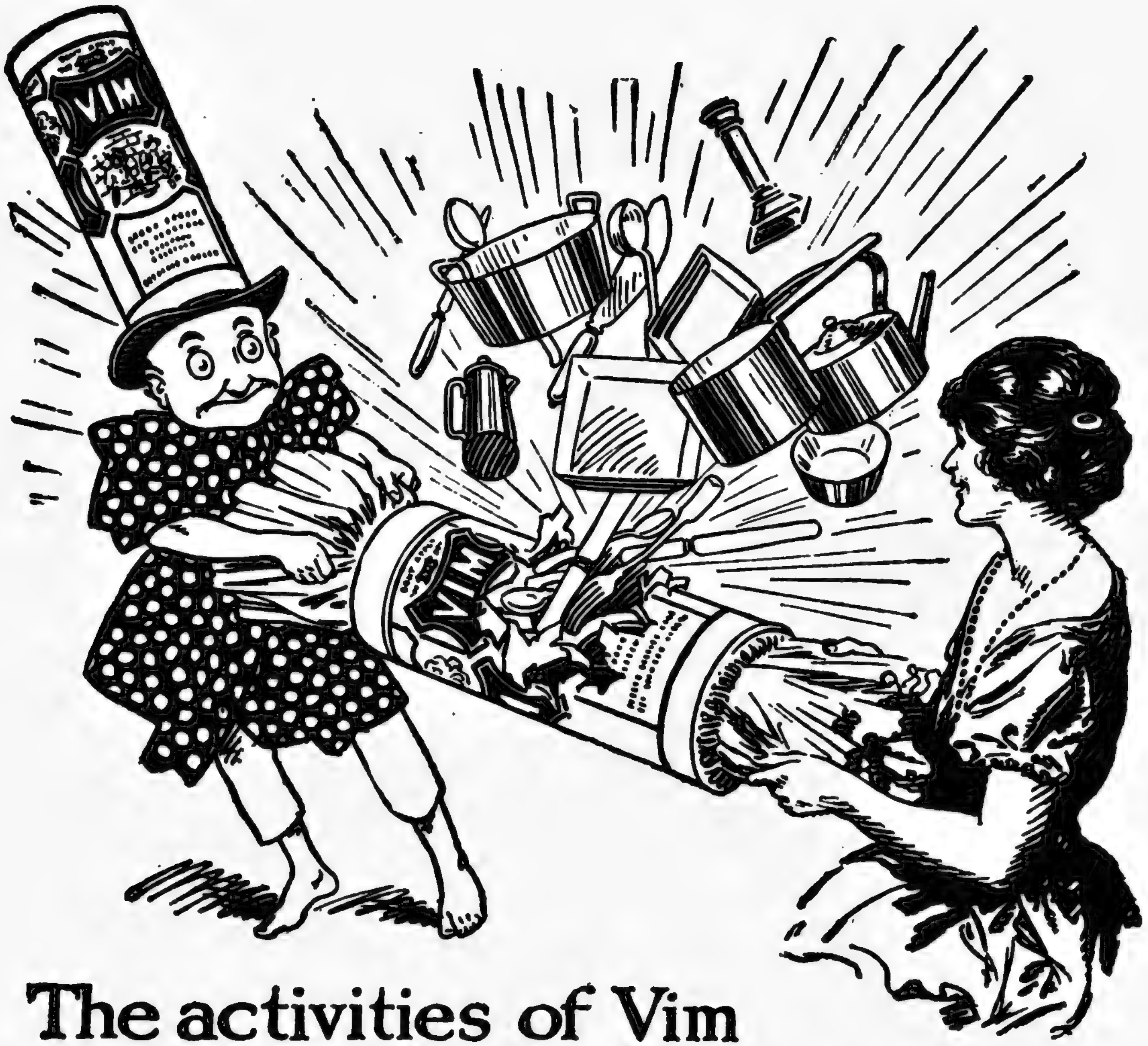
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

"Hopeful" (Reading), 2s.; P. B., 1s. 2d.; D. M. R., 7d.; "Worcester Das," 1s.; "Black Cat," 9d.; "Registered, Derby," 6½d.; W. K. (East Ham), 16s. 8d.; "Black Boy," 1s.; F. N. W. (Porthcawl), 1s.; "Highlander," 1s. 8d.; L. A. M. (Richmond), 2s.; "Hopeful" (York), 5½d.; "Semper Fidelis," 6d.; R., 3d.; Anon., 6½d.; W. S. S., 1s. 2½d.; "Thea," 1s. 6d.; "Toppe," 1s. 1d.; "Also Ran," 10d.; "Nimble," 1s.; Anon., 5d.; H. A., 1s. 3d.; "Poor Nini," 10d.; "Tyke," 1s.; H., 2s. 6d.; "Working Woman," 6d.; "Joe," 10d.; F. H. G. (Evesham), 1s.; "Ninth" (Kenley), 2s.; "Small Ninth," 1s.; "Sporting Chance," 1s.; J. M. (Brixton Hill), 2s. 6d.; Anon., 6d.; "Meadow Park," 2s. 6d.; Anon., 1s. 2d.; "Nature" (Golcar), 2s.; "Even Money," 3s.; A. B., 1s. 2d.; C. T., 2s.; "Stick It Jerry," 1s.; "Two from Hull," 1s. 6d.; "Fairly Lucky," 6d.; "One Ninth," 11d.; S. M. (Hull), 6d.; J. T. B. (Stafford), 9d.; "Yeovil," 1s. 6d.; "Willie," 3d.; C. M. B., 1s. 6d.; "Worm-cutting," 1s.; "Toftsenian," 2s. 6d.; W. B., 1s. 1½d.; W. H. C., 5s.; V. B. C., 3d.; B. C. N. D., 7d.; Anon. (Bristol), 5½d.; "Ninth P. P.," 1s.; R. L., 6d.; W., 2s. 6d.; G. S. W., 9d.; "Wellwisher" (Manchester), 9½d.; Anon., 1s. 1½d.; B. A. F., 1s. 9d.; "Exonia," 1s. 8d.; G. S. B., 2s.; G. P., 1s.; E. A., 3d.; "Goran," 2s. 6d.; A. M. W., 1s. 9d.; "Hobo," 6d.; W., 1s. 1½d.; "My Mite," 3d.; "A Beds Peacemaker," 1s. 6d.; Mrs. H. C., 3s. 2d.; "Young Lad," 9d.; "Only a Ninth," 3s. 3½d.; O. T. P. W., 3d.; "Semper Idem," 8d.; D. E. R. B., 1s.; "Londoner," 2s. 6d.; Anon., 6d.; J. B., 1s.; M. S. C., 1s. 3d.; Anon., 2d.; E. G. C. (Bayswater), 6d.; "New Moon," 1s. 6d.; "Optimistic," 9½d.; E. E. C. (Bayswater), 1s.; W. B. (Colchester), 2s. 8d.; M., 2s. 2d.; C. L., 8d.; Anon. (Huddersfield), 1s.; "Two Ninths" (Wales), 3s. 6d.; "Another Ninth," 7d.; "Betty," 1s.; "Bulleteer," 2s.; "Ninth" (Edinburgh), 11d.; S. K. C. (Chesterfield), 7s. 6d.; W. J., 5s. 0d.; "Old Reader," 10½d.; "Delayed but not Forgotten," 115 francs; "Wellwisher," 4d.; "Winnikens," 2s. 6d.; "Weekly Reader," 1s. 6d.; "Redditch," 1s. 3½d.; P. K. H., 6d.; M. M. (Portsmouth), 6d.; R. H., 1s.; "Tea," 2s. 3d.; J. N., 7d.; "White Heather," 2s. 6d.; L. H. P., 7d.; "Pip," 2s. 10d.; "Squeak," 6d.; "Bubbles," 6d.; T. A., 1s. 4d.; J. A. H., 1s. 6d.; B. J., 4½d.; "Hard Up," 1s. 6d.; Anon., 1s. 11d.; "Digger," 1s. 4d.; "Poor Molly," 6d.; R. J. L., 1s. 10d.; Anon., 4½d.; "Irish Ninther," 2s.; G. S. C., 2s. 11½d.; Anon., 1s.; H. C. T., 1s.; "Nanco," 3d.; "Brighton," 2s. 3d.; "My Ninth," 7½d.; Anon., 2½d.; C. M., 1½d.; "Ex-Soldier," 2d.; "Chorus Girl," 4½d.; Anon., 1s. 6d.; "Unlucky" (Upton), 6d.; M. H., 2s. 3d.; Anon., 1s. 9d.; M. I., 3s. 3d.; "Spoof," 3d.; Anon., 3½d.; "Another," 6s.; D., 1s.; L. W. S., 2s.; "Poor Widow," 1s. 1½d.; "Working Man," 2s.; L. A., 2s. 4d.; M. S., 10d.; Mrs. S. (Watford), 3s. 10d.; "Disabled," 8d.; S. C. P. C., 1s. 1d.; "Ninth," 1s. 2d.; Anon. (Bristol), 1s.; Anon., 2s. 3d.; "Ninth" (Kendal), 2s. 7d.; "Auld Reekie," 2s. 8d.; "Fanefield," 8s. 8d.; "The First Ninth," 4s.; W. H., 8s. 1d.; "Cheerio," 1s. 8½d.; Anon., 1s.; Anon., 1s. 4d.; Miss F. C., 2s. 7d.; A. T., 10½d.; "Stepney," 10d.; D. S., 1s. 3d.; "Good Luck," 8d.; J. C. C. P., 1s. 2d.; J. K., 7½d.; Anon., 6d.; "Sick Man," 9d.; B. K. C., 11d.; "Unemployed's Wife," 10½d.; M. B. J., 2s. 6d.; "Preston," 1s. 7d.; J. & J. B., 4s. 1d.; E. P., 6d.; L., 2s. 3d.; Anon. (Nottingham), 10½d.; "Wee Bristol," 5d.; W. S. G., 3s. 6d.; Stoke-on-Trent, 2s.; "Alys," 2s. 4d.; Anon., 6d.; A. W. H., 2s.; "Three Ninths," 7d.; "Sailor," 1s. 9d.; "Wellwisher," 1s.; B. W. (Portsmouth), 1s.; "37," 3s.; "Ninth for Luck," 1s. 1½d.; "Widow" 4½d.; "Constant Reader" (Carlisle) 4½d.; "Soldier's Wife," 1s. 6d; Anon., 1½d.; W. G. C., 1s. 6d.; "Dulcie," 1s. 6d.; F. B., 1s. 2d.; Anon., 1s. 1d.; "No. 1 Target," 1s. 1½d.; "Sporting Ninth," 1s. 6d.; "A Friend," 3d.; E. W., 2s. 6d.; "Seventh," 2s.; "Birmingham 5," 1s. 2d.; "Ilford," 1s.; "Unlucky," 6d.; "Collier's Wife," 1s.; "Small Ninth," 4d.; Anon. (Ramsgate), 10s.; "A Widow," 1s. 6d.; E. H., 1s. 2d.; J. P., 2s. 6d.; "Wellwisher" (London), 1s. 3d.; "A Ninth," 1s. 8d.; "Mother of Ten," 1s.; "Tommy," 6d.; "Bon Accord," 2s. 3d.; "Billiehurst," 2s. 6d.

(Many acknowledgments unavoidably held over.)

For Rich Bachelors Only

FOR SALE: "Sprockleby Hall," a fine mansion standing in twenty acres of ground; hunting, fishing, shooting—a bachelor's paradise. Price ten thousand and another thousand for the ghost which appears every New Year's Eve in the west wing. Only rich bachelors need apply. Further particulars in "John Bull's" Xmas 'Xtra, price 6d.



The activities of Vim add to the Xmas Festivities

"My Hat!"

Full of Brightness, Vim helps Mother.

BEFORE a pot is put on to boil—before a dish is put in the oven to bake—before the cloth is laid for dinner—Vim will stand at Mother's right hand adding brightness to all she touches.

And after dinner, when the fun is at its highest, Vim will help to make the task of clearing away the dishes lighter and brighter.

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CLEANSER VIM & POLISHER
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. . Sports and Sportsmen by ROWLEY MILE .

THE "HUNCH" AT KEMPTON.

Getting a "Hunch."

We have all heard of hunches. A "hunch" is a premonition. It is the ruling "system" with women who do not often go racing, and know nothing of horses, but can pick three or four winners at a meeting. With practical racing men the hunch is not so pronounced. Probably they allow their reasoning faculties to interfere with their selections.

Remarkable Demonstration.

Last Saturday week, I had a remarkable demonstration of a hunch—which was so general that I confess I was amazed. The hunch was this: every knowledgeable person one met had a hunch that Warrior would not win the last race.

Warnings.

People I knew said, when I mentioned Warrior: "I'm not backing *him!*" Or when they asked me what I was "doing," added: "You're not backing Warrior, are you?" They all had hunches that Warrior would not win.

Ill-Placed Confidence.

The strange thing is that the hunch did not extend to the ring. The general public backed Mr. Batho's charge down to 7 to 4. They had no "hunch." And Warrior finished 9th or 10th. I saw him passing as I was on my way home. How strange are "hunches!"

JUMPERS TO FOLLOW.

Parapluie.—A winner both on the flat and over hurdles, this mare jumps a country really well, and can be relied upon to hold her own in second-class company.

Little England.—This horse is quite one of the smartest among the newcomers over fences, and his victory at Ludlow last April is not likely to be a solitary success.

The Knight.—This very useful hurdler is now approaching his best, and when not overburdened with weight will always be found equal to holding his own in handicap society.

Sancho Panza.—A recent importation from Ireland, this good-looking gelding has done well since being under the charge of Capt. Whitaker, and is worth bearing in mind when competing in short-distance steeplechases.

North End.—Once considered by the late Bill Jarvis to be a "second Cyllene," this colt proved of little value on the flat. He has, however, taken kindly to jumping, and is thought certain to pay his way.

Sherwood Forester.—One of the speediest steeplechasers in training, this horse has done a lot of good work lately, and may shortly be expected to leave his Birmingham form a long way in the rear.

Prince Herod.—This horse is so obviously the right sort for a jumper that it is scarcely surprising he is being schooled over hurdles, and rumour credits him with showing considerable aptitude for the game.

Newlands.—A chaser of the best type, this horse may confidently be expected to prove that his victory at Liverpool last spring was no fluke, and it is unlikely the best has yet been seen of him.

Charlie Wise.—Albeit not representing a particularly high class, this horse is quite an accomplished "timber topper," and as such can certainly be placed to win races.

Ocean Star.—A really good chaser over three miles or thereabouts, this mare may be regarded as certain to do the select little stable in which she is trained a good turn very soon.

Bucket.—One of those uncertain animals on the flat who frequently become useful hurdle-racers. He has shaped remarkably well in his practice gallops.

THIS WEEK'S SELECTIONS.

The horses in parentheses after the black letter selection are, in their order, alternative tips if the principal selection is absent.

WINDSOR (WEDNESDAY).

1.0 **John Peel** (Woodford Green, Yahna).
1.30 **Amnesty** (Mask Off).
2.0 **Beggar's End** (Sancho Panza).
2.30 **Petty Cury*** (Foazam, Huanora).
3.0 **King George** (Llangarren, Brownstown).
3.30 **Wavertree** (Square Dance, The Bore).

WINDSOR (THURSDAY).

1.0 **The Bleeks** (Mabee).
1.30 **Vive-La** (Ballyhandy, Burly).
2.0 **Royal Bucks** (Corrig).
2.30 **Prickly** (Somerville).
3.0 **Bar Gold*** (Black Rabbit, Errand Boy).
3.30 **Gerald L.** (Mythical, Ocean Star).

HURST PARK (FRIDAY).

1.0 **Pay Only** (Old Tay Bridge, Newlands).
1.30 **Yewden** (Troika, House).
2.0 **Berneray*** (Animosity, The Fly III.)
2.30 **Ravenspool** (Old Times).
3.0 **Ulysses** (Irish Eagle, Galway Prince).
3.30 **Good Points** (Hairpin II.).

HURST PARK (SATURDAY).

1.0 **Regent's Park** (White Ronald, Devonport).
1.30 **Bedelia** (King George, Foazam).
2.0 **Keep Cool** (Daisy Cutter, Square Dance).
2.30 **Ninon*** (Derryboy II.).
3.0 **Lukewarm** (Morganatic Marriage, Sancho Panza).
3.30 **White Satin** (Cruiser Arc, Eastern Prince).

THE BALL GAME.

Our Forecasts.

Of our 38 forecasts for Dec. 2nd, no fewer than 28 were correct. These included 2 away winners of 5 given; and 3 of 5 drawn games.

Harmony.

One of the most improved sides this season is Birmingham, and the reason of it is that there is at last some harmony among the players. One or two malcontents have a bigger effect on a team than people outside the game would imagine. Two tips from me *re* Birmingham are that you go on watching the progress of Joe Bradford, and if you can get 20 to 1 about the Midlanders winning the Cup, take it.

The Smith Family.

When Roberts went to Manchester, Bolton Wanderers began to look round for a new centre-forward, and were lucky enough to find Glasgow Rangers in the mood to release Smith (J. R.). A goal in each of his first two games meant three points for Bolton, so Smith has already partly paid for himself. Smith has ambitions, and he left Scotland chiefly because he saw little prospect of progress as a member of the Rangers' reserve eleven.

Buchan's Understudy.

Jock Patterson is doing too well this season to lose the centre-forward job in the Sunderland side, but if he required a stimulant, it would be forthcoming in young Scott, who, Sunderland friends tell me, is playing class football with the reserves. Scott was signed on to understudy Charlie Buchan, and he is a local discovery.

The Square Peg.

A lot has been said about the transfer of Charles Wilson from the 'Spurs to Huddersfield with the Londoners still looking for a centre-forward. But Wilson's success in Yorkshire only vindicates the judgment of Peter McWilliam, who prophesied that Wilson would do well in any team whose football was "not on the scientific lines needed at White Hart Lane." It's but another instance of a square peg finding a square hole.

The "Pocket" Back.

When I first saw David Rollo kicking a ball it was in Ireland, and he was a wing forward. A year or two have passed since then, and in the interim Rollo has become about the best back Erin has sent us—bar, of course, Billy McCracken. There is not much of David, but he's a deadly tackler, and one of the few class players who never seems to have an off-day. Rollo is a true patriot, and his national enthusiasm can be seen in his whole-hearted football.

A Real Loss.

Clapton Orient are feeling a draught, and the wind goes further up in a necessary rest for their best player, Owen Williams. Not a few uncomplimentary remarks were passed when Williams was chosen to play for England at West Bromwich a few weeks back, but he was one of the few who came out of that game with any glory attached. Williams has a penchant for the cut-in, and there is no winger playing who is more proficient at this dangerous move.

Coming Strong.

Hardy, the youthful South Shields' centre-half, came into first-class football as a centre-forward, but although he got goals he was soon moved into the intermediate line. Somebody seems to have shown some perception about this, for Hardy promises to be a really good pivot with a little more experience. He's an artist in getting his head to the ball and has plenty of ideas towards constructive football. Incidentally, he will have a powerful physique when he has filled out.

FORECASTS FOR DECEMBER 16.

(Nap Selections in black type.)

HOME WINNERS.

Birmingham, **Burnley**, **Liverpool**, **Middlesbrough**, **Sunderland**, Barnsley, Blackpool, **Bury**, **Manchester U.**, Notts C., Port Vale, Wolverhampton W., **Portsmouth**, Crewe, **Clyde**, **Dundee**, **Falkirk**, **Kilmarnock**, Third Lanark.

AWAY WINNERS.

Newcastle, **Manchester C.**, Leeds, **Leicester**, Brighton, **Raith R.**, **Rangers**.

DRAWS.

Arsenal v. Huddersfield, Blackburn v. Bolton, **Chelsea v. Tottenham**, Sheffield v. Preston, **Bradford C. v. Fulham**, **Clapton v. Shields**, **Queen's Park R. v. Bristol C.**, Reading v. Northampton, **Watford v. Plymouth**, Hearts v. Celtic, **Motherwell v. Hibernians**, **St. Mirren v. Aberdeen.**

SUGGESTED COUPONS.

3 DRAWS:—Chelsea v. Tottenham, Bradford C. v. Fulham, Queen's P.R. v. Bristol C.

4 AWAY:—Manchester C., Leicester, Raith R., Rangers.

8 HOME:—Burnley, Liverpool, Sunderland, Bury, Manchester U., Portsmouth, Dundee, Falkirk.

3 HOME, 2 AWAY:—Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Sunderland, Leicester, Rangers.

1 HOME, 1 AWAY, 1 DRAW:—Bury, Rangers, Chelsea v. Tottenham.

John Bull's Footballers

No. 13.—THE CELTIC TEAM

THE Celtic team is a national institution in Scotland, and the eclipse of the famous club this season is of more concern to Scotsmen than the election of a Pussyfoot M.P.

But a Celtic resurrection is a certainty. Mr. Tom Maley, the manager, is about the best man in the business; he is facing the criticism of the club with a stiff lip, and continuing to evolve a team that will, he hopes, be up to the old standard. The Celtic have a wonderful nursery, and more stars will soon arrive from it.

Still, there is no Jimmy McMenemy at the moment, who, with Steve Bloomer, was the best forward of the past twenty-five years. Celtic are also feeling the loss of Dodds, who with Shaw and McNair constituted the best club defence in the world. The latter pair remain, but they are not so young nowadays, and Tom Maley is particularly anxious about their successors.

Nor is the middle line what it used to be. Cringan, the old Sunderland man, is a sound pivot, but the familiar touch of class is missing from the line.

The best of the attack seem to be Patsy Gallagher and Cassidy, but the Celtic could do with M'Kay back. There must have been internal differences for this class inside-forward to leave for Blackburn.

Scotsmen claim, however, that the disbandment of the reserve team was a bad mistake; that the directors' policy is not satisfactory to the players; and that more than one of them would like to be on the open transfer list.

But this is a black view, and the Celtic supporters may have been spoiled by generations of success. A little poverty never hurts anyone, and it's not long odds against the team even yet winning the Championship. Give Mr. Maley another few weeks and the Celtic will be near the top again. P. S.

Next week: S. Puddefoot (Falkirk).

Buy Pens for your friends this Christmas and win £3,000. See Page 4.

How to Pick Winners

Twelve Points to Remember when Betting

There are no such things as "dead certs" in racing but careful backers can diminish their chances of losing money by studying this series of articles written by an ex-handicapper

SOME punters imagine they have found a quicker way to wealth and prosperity when they discover or exploit "systems." Blindly to follow jockeys' mounts, first or second favourites, etc., is a sure and a quick way to the Bankruptcy Court. To use discretion is another matter, and intelligent concentration may make all the difference in the world.

Whatever system is decided upon, neither winning nor losing should be allowed to rattle you. Don't get too elated over your wins or too depressed over your losses. In the case of the former there is always the temptation to depart from any plan which it has been decided to follow, always with the hope that by launching out in another direction, there will be the same attendant luck to increase the winnings.

Conversely, the backer who is losing on what he calculated was a sound system, goes right off the rails after about a month's indifferent results, flies to another, only to find that his original idea was the best.

I imagine the whole racing army will go to their graves with systems or dreams of systems. In any system with possibilities the psychological element is important. There is such a thing as perseverance, and, on the other hand, stupid obstinacy.

With increasing stakes there comes a time when the prudent backer must put his thinking cap on, and consider whether he can pursue the method any further. Increasing stakes has meant the ruin of many families. There would seem to be more sense in decreasing the stakes until you have got possession of enough of the bookmakers' money to enable you to have a "splash" at his expense.

The interesting part of racing is, after all, in studying results (whether you have a financial interest or not), the betting, description of the races, etc., but, above all, seeing the races yourself with a good pair of glasses and drawing your own conclusions.

It is simply amazing the number of "good things" which fail to materialise at the first time of asking when the money is down. Any expert will confirm this.

Why should it be so ? With the very best of advice it happens in at least 75 per cent. of them, and round about 50 per cent. of the 75 proceed to win the next time out. If the owner happens to be of the "commercial" order, the said "good thing" will probably get about two or three misses before he wins again.

It may reasonably be asked how on earth can anyone be successful in view of the difficulties referred to in my article last week. The answer is that you must look for the minimum of risk in certain races with the maximum odds and then and only then do business.

Here are a few points which will be fully explained in the course of the articles :—

(1) If a horse carrying about 6 st. runs prominently in a sprint race and you are satisfied that the form is correct, back it when it carries a heavier impost. He will have the assistance of a stronger and more experienced jockey and certainly he is in a different class.

(2) As a rule to follow penalised horses next time out is common-sense, but here there must be discretion. A 10 lb. penalty on a horse carrying, say, 8 st. over a distance is not attractive. A 5 lb. penalty on a lightweight makes little or no difference. In the latter case, if the handicapper had another go at him perhaps he would make it a stone. In addition, there is no reason to "wait." The handicapper has his eyes open.

(3) It is important to carefully study the conditions attaching to certain plates. A horse may be eligible to run in these simply because the shortest of short heads was against him on a previous occasion—otherwise he would be disqualified from running.

(4) Never (as Rowley Mile has already told you) back for a place when the runners are much over eight. If a fourth the odds is correct for eight runners, what should be the odds in a scramble sprint with 30 runners ?

(5) While there is no such thing as a "certainty" in racing, there is the next best thing—but consider the odds.

(6) In trying to estimate the chance of a horse from the market price, where they dangle dead meat in front of you, it is important you should know the owners who bet and those who don't.

(7) If a prominent jockey is on a horse at an outside price, it is a fairly good sign that the animal is not fancied.

(8) The element of risk enters more into steeplechases than hurdle races.

(9) At the commencement of the jumping season most of the hurdle race winners are confined to first or second favourites.

(10) Biggish firms would prefer to be without this business. They must keep their names up by way of advertising, and some "gentlemen" jockeys must get a living ! Money must talk and the business is too small !

(11) Later on when the handicappers have collared the "form," leave them alone.

(12) As a rule, there is something wrong with a maiden from four years upwards.

And now let me say a few words about betting in relation to the principal handicaps of the season.

In the Lincoln Handicap a three-year-old is set an almost impossible task, and as only two have been successful during the last 25 years, a horse of this age should, as a rule, be left alone.

It is the first race of the season for a decent gamble at long odds. Usually it is won by a candidate fairly well up in the weights.

On the whole, it is a race to deal lightly with, and the only thing known for a certainty about the Lincoln Handicap is that Southern Stables, such as Lambourn, possess an advantage by reason of the climatic conditions. We should all have to go back to school again if they sprung on us, say a Lincoln winner trained at Ayr ! Records and common sense prove this to be next to the impossible.

In next week's article the conclusions arrived at in respect of the Lincoln will be given.

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That is what a ticket in the Hospitals Competition may be worth. £7,500 is worth winning—worth a try! It means an additional income of about £400 a year—provision for your wife and family—freedom from care—more comforts—a better house—a fuller life. You will be giving a Christmas gift to the Hospitals, too, because the money will go to help 100 Hospitals. **GO IN AND WIN!**

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Also Special Prizes of £300, £150 an £50 to those who sell the tickets winning the first three prizes.

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You will receive with your ticket (containing the voting coupon) a sheet showing the advertisements (beautifully reproduced in colour) which you are asked to judge.

Full instructions are given on the back of the ticket.

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The order of merit will be decided by the votes cast by all the competitors, which will be counted and checked by an independent firm of Chartered Accountants.

The competitor whose list agrees, or most nearly agrees with the order so arrived will win £7,500, the next nearest £2,000, and so on.

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All business houses and shops willing to help the hospitals by selling tickets are requested to apply to address on coupon.

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Our Letter Parliament

Questions that might be asked in the House

Brief to the point letters not exceeding 100 words are invited; 5s. is paid for each letter published. Name and address essential, not necessarily for publication.

Divorce and Morals.

Is the new Government going to bring in a Bill for the abolition of all divorce, and thereby greatly improve the morals of the people by holding up a pure ideal of monogamy instead of the less desirable ideas of free love and promiscuity? It would be a great thing if Britain would lead the world in this vital step towards the advancement of the race. It would also have a beneficial effect on literature and on the modern stage productions.—N. W. Beecham (Lady Beecham), St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

Cotton Kings' Ingratitude.

How many Lancashire cotton magnates are migrating to India and, taking advantage of the Indian Tariff, are opening mills there to compete with and damage Lancashire's staple industry? These persons, often risen from humble beginnings and obtaining means of investment from Lancashire's workers, now show their gratitude by biting the hand that fed them. Cannot something be done to curb this tendency?—James Ross, 108, Avondale Road, Darwen.

Dentists' Lost Livelihood.

The Dentists' Act, 1921, provides for the prohibition of the practice of dentistry by unregistered persons, and among other things, specifically precludes from registering all persons who have for years previous to the Act practised as dentists and who had not attained the age of 23 years on the 28th July, 1921.

This has resulted in numbers of young men being deprived of their livelihood.

Surely this should be amended so that the Dental Board established under the Act should have a discretionary power to deal with such cases.—H. N. Peake, 17, Market Place, Banbury.

Inhuman Slaughtering.

As long ago as 1904 a Committee appointed by the Admiralty to consider the question of the humane slaughtering of animals arrived at the conclusion that "all animals, without exception, must be stunned or otherwise rendered unconscious before blood is drawn."

That stunning previous to killing is perfectly practicable is proved at the Carlisle abattoir, where humane killers have been exclusively used for the last 23 years. They do away with all suffering, and there is no danger connected with the use of these instruments.

Humane slaughtering and public abattoirs go hand-in-hand; in England we have no abattoir system and very little humane killing. Surely the time has arrived when these two important reforms should be effected, universally, in the interests of humanity, hygiene and economy?—R. Stephen Ayling, F.R.I.B.A., F.R.S.I., 108, Baker Street, W.

The Black Man's Curse.

The menace of coloured men in our midst is a far more serious thing than many people imagine and the authorities ought to give it attention. I am quite sure white girls would think carefully before consorting with a black if they realised that the dreadful disease, syphilis, is hereditary in most native races. I have visited hundreds of kraals in Africa where I have seen these niggers in indescribable filth, eating rats, snails and caterpillars and living cheek by jowl with sufferers from leprosy and other horrible diseases. These are the type of people who, after getting a smattering of education find their way to this country and associate with British girls.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing to a negro. Directly he is taught by the missionaries, he assumes airs, looks down on his own people and regards himself as good as any white man.

He adopts our religion to suit his own ends. I heard two men accused of murder and cannibalism sing hymns on the way to prison. One who was acquitted committed the same crime a year later.

Little wonder it hurts me to see white girls in the company of blacks since I know that as well as probably being carriers of dreadful disease they excel in every form of vice known to man.—G. B. Rammage, Putney, S.W.15.

An Insult for Christmas.

I wonder how many Britishers who buy through the post presents for the kiddies at Christmas will find their money spent on *German goods*. After reading a catalogue I sent a Postal Order for a small present advertised. When it arrived I could hardly see it for labels—"Made in Germany."

But why should we get things like this? Who wants things made in Germany when our *victorious soldiers* are starving here? Why aren't the goods *advertised* as German? — Fair Play, Brixham.

Pilfering Postmen.

The efficiency of the Post Office daily decreases. More and more letters seem to get "lost." Here is a suggestion which would put an end to these petty thefts.

Each pillar box should be fitted with an arrangement whereby it keeps a record of the number of letters thrust into it—a simple device. The postman before emptying the box would put in an official envelope which would register the last number. Opening the door would send the numbering device back to No. 1. Thus a stamped record of the number of envelopes in the bag is turned in by the postman and is easily checked. — Benjamin Englefield, 4, White Horse Cottages, Dorking.

Let off Steam!

DON'T sit on the Safety Valve when you've something to say. Say it here straight and strong. You'll be heard!

Wanted—Air Docks.

The last Government bungled Empire air matters badly. We now have no airship service, and the aeroplane industry is struggling for existence.

The new Government should commence by developing the airship, as it is the only type of aircraft able to fly to Australia, touching only at British territory. Commercial airships will pay—their running costs are low, but they are handicapped by the expense of establishing bases. Steamship companies pay because they can get dock facilities cheaply. Dock companies pay because there are lots of steamships. The same will apply in the air.

The Government could immediately employ 2,000 men if it would encourage airship traffic—better far to pay wages for work which will give a good return in ten years' time than a dole which gives no return at any time! — F. L. M. Boothby, Comdr. R.N. (Ret.), The Royal Aero Club.

Self-Centred Citizens.

Time and again in the Press I have seen blunders which have clearly shown the extremely vague nature of the average Englishman's knowledge of the Geography of Ireland. It does not speak well for the system of education practised in England or for the industry with which English children apply themselves to their geographical studies. When will we become more broad-minded and realise that there are other places in the world besides our own particular district?—W.B.R., Belfast.

Driving Mothers Mad.

I have been trying to forget the terrible idea which was recently evolved that poor little insane children should be slain in a lethal chamber.

I implore the doctors responsible to consider that these helpless little ones are loved not only by God but by the mothers who brought them into the world. Can they not realise what agony of mind the mere suggestion is to a mother? It is enough to drive her, a good sane woman, mad in very earnest. Please do all in your power to wipe out this terrible scheme.—A Loving Mother, Liverpool.

NOTE.—*Every mother and indeed every humane person may ignore the proposal to institute a lethal chamber for insane children, for we feel confident that the time will never come when such a thing would even be considered.*—The Editor.

To Ensure World Peace.

The dominant thought behind every tactic of any Government to-day should be peace. This Government is harassed by its heritage of war-sequels in general, and of the devil's brew of the Versailles "peace" in particular, and some of those sequels, such as unemployment and un-homing, have immediate urgency not only in the name of humanity, but because bad conditions provoke revolutions.—H.B., Hampstead.

Pseudo-Medical Books.

It seems incredible that the Home Secretary should take no action to stop the ever-increasing sale of pseudo-medical books. Is he aware of the guise in which these books are offered to the public? If so, he ought to at once take steps to prevent the sale of such books except in recognised booksellers, and to prevent the sale of surgical and medical appliances except in regular chemists' shops.—James Wheeler, Birmingham.

Railway Subsidy or Purchase?

Why is it that Mr. Bonar Law proposes to spend £50,000,000 to subsidise the railways on a scheme for unemployment, seeing that individual lines are able to pay shareholders 15 per cent. dividend, and further, if the railways have deteriorated since the war, would not this sum be about their purchasing price? This is the ideal time for nationalisation.—Edwin Goddard, 22, Burne Street, Marylebone.

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CIGARETTES
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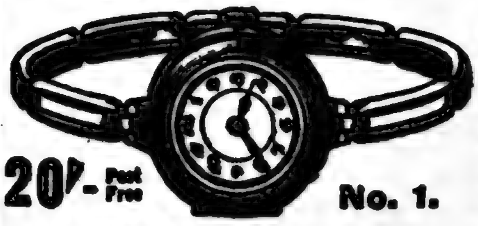

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No 10 2 or more pairs post free.

MEN'S DERBY BOOTS made of Fine Quality Leather, stout soles Black or Brown sizes 6-11 10/6 Postage 1/- extra
Similar Boy's Boots in Black, 8/6 per pair, post 1/- ex. Sizes 11 to 5.

Satisfaction or money refunded.

Medium or High Leg.

GENUINE SOUTH AFRICAN FIELD BOOTS Double Soles and Tongue, fully stitched & waterproofed Leather lined throughout. STAMPED Black or Tan. 14/6 per pair Postage 1/- extra. 2 or more pairs post free. Sizes 5 to 11

Call or Write enclosing crossed P.O.

If you don't want your boots just yet, you can send your order on a postcard and have the boots you require reserved.

Open Daily till 7 p.m., Saturdays till 2 p.m.
THE STRAND BOOT CO. (Dept. J.B.), 203, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.2 (Entrance in Essex Street).

THE "JOHN BULL" GUARANTEE.

We guarantee the goods advertised by every firm whose trade announcement appears in JOHN BULL*—i.e., we hold ourselves responsible for their being of the quality and standard represented at the time of purchase and at the date of payment, either in full or of first instalment, and if any reader can show just cause for dissatisfaction with the purchase of any goods made through any trade advertisement in our columns we will refund the purchase-money, provided the goods complained of are sent to us within one week from the date of original purchase, if such is made within one month from the date of this issue. All communications should be addressed to* JOHN BULL, *Advertisement Department,* 57, *Long Acre, London, W.C.2.*

John Bull Long Acre
John Bull's Letter Bag

WRITE to JOHN BULL about it. Tell us your troubles—ask us questions. We do not deal flippantly except with flippant writers. There is a world of sympathy and understanding in the men who conduct the "Letter Bag." Write soon and write often. An expert staff deals with Legal and Financial inquiries by post. All you have to do is to enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the reply.

OLD BOOKS.—"Where can I obtain a catalogue of prices of old and valuable books?" Try Christies, 8, King Street, St. James, London, S.W.1.

AMY (Blackpool).—"Why does mother put a marble in the kettle?" In order to let the kettle know when it is time to blow off steam.

TINY (Burslem).—"What exactly is beauty?" It is just a matter of taste. Some prefer it with powder; others without.

ABSENT-MINDED (Norwich).—"What *is* a man to do when he ties a knot in his handkerchief to remind him of something, and then forgets what it is?" Tie a knot in his neck.

H. H. (Liverpool).—"I first heard of JOHN BULL when I was living in Buenos Ayres." Trust you led a respectable life in that land of milk and honey.

T. A. Y. (Canterbury).—"I am in a tight fix; do you know anyone who would give me £2,000 or loan it?" We don't, unless you care to try Charlie Chaplin.

G. H. Q. (Aberavon).—"When I walk in a moving train do I move faster than the train?" Certainly, if you are walking in the same direction as the train.

F. H. (Newcastle).—"Why do we swing our arms when we walk?" It's just nature's way. Did you think it was to prevent your knees from knocking together?

EPHRAIM (Plymouth).—"One of my sons tells me you are offering £10,000 to anyone sending a scheme to settle unemployment." Don't you believe him.

T. P. (Maida Vale).—"Give a hint to the managers to warm their theatres a bit." The last one we "hinted" to on the subject threatened to have us arrested for the use of obscene language.

R. H. (Southampton).—"Are there any cities without Cathedrals?" In the United States, yes. In Great Britain, strictly speaking, every city must be or must have been the see of a Bishop.

MISS R. N. (Luton).—"I should like to read all the letters you get from readers; I bet some of them are priceless." They are, but few so sweet as yours. Did mother know you wrote?

KATIE (Leeds).—"I often wonder what sort of a person you are. You do make me laugh with your funny replies." Katie, dear, we're having your words set to music upon which our photograph will appear.

T. W. (Mansfield).—"We have rather a nice bath at our house." How you must look forward to each new moon!

A. R. (Lowestoft).—"It's only fools who waste their money backing horses." Many thousands of our readers bow and thank you.

F. C. (Chiswick).—"Why do the parsons so delight in talking about hell?" We cannot say, except that it is a warm subject for winter evenings.

PETER (Kirkcaldy).—"Do animals know when they are being treated kindly?" Just as well as any human being.

T. D. (Durham).—"Where does all the dust go?" Cannot say exactly, but we get a good eyeful each time we take the corner in Long Acre.

DONALD (Glasgow).—"What makes us hungry?" In your case, Donald, you probably waste too much time between drinks.

MOTHER (Totnes).—"My young son is at the bottom of the class." Don't worry, mother. Both ends of the class are taught the same sort of thing.

MRS. B. (Earsfield).—"I don't believe the 'Star of Fortune' *can* be fitted together." Somebody will believe differently and win the good money.

G. J. (Cardiff).—"Papers with a circulation like yours cannot afford to tell the people the truth." Then how on earth do you think we have done it all these years?

WILFRED (Doncaster).—"Twelve months ago I had a perfect head of hair. To-day I am practically bald." Don't worry, look at the money your saving.

A. M. (Huddersfield).—"My young lady says that when we're married, she will want at least a dozen new dresses a year. What would you advise me to do?" Marry her dressmaker.

F. G. M. (Brighton).—"Men seem to have a passion for intrigue; and the older they grow, the worse they get." Women have it from birth and never get better.

BILL H. (Woolwich).—"You seem to have a lot of experts on JOHN BULL. Have you a wine taster?" Yes, but he's a little out of practice. Still, you never know what Christmas may bring.

M. N. (Dover).—"If raffles are illegal, how is it there are so many going on?" Because we are a sporting people and the police occasionally get a spot of something which clouds their vision.

Letters must be addressed to the Editor. No fee is charged in respect of inquiries. Full name and address should be given—not necessarily for publication.

NATURALIST (St. Albans).—"May I send you a lovely bunch of roses?" Yes, anything except chocolate.

O. K. (Belvedere).—"Actors invariably write good poetry." But better pro's.

S. R. (Wigan).—"Even if you don't answer this letter I shan't be deterred from writing again." If we do, does your threat hold?

A STRANGER.—"Can I send you a ring and a brooch to sell for the benefit of your 'Greatest of These Fund.'" Certainly.

JESSIE (Dundee).—"Is every seventh wave a bigger one?" 'Um, well, the big one that tried to choke us during the summer didn't mention any number.

EARNEST (Barking).—"What do you *really* think of Communism?" In JOHN BULL all that we really think, we really say. We have no axes to grind.

OLD BENEDICT (Luton).—"There may be advantages in being married, but——" There may be an advantage in grousing, but——

A. H. T. (Middlesbrough).—"What is the significance of those broad-brimmed hats the Mexicans wear?" It depends on the curl of the brim. Sometimes it's downright naughty.

B. N. (Huddersfield).—"I have discovered the secret of eternal youth and I can make it at 5s. 9d. a bottle." Don't overdo the treatment or you'll find yourself spanked and sent to bed.

R. A. (Bayswater, W.).—"Public telephone boxes are stuffy, ill-ventilated and first-class germ-breeding huts." Drop a line to the P.M.G., with list of germs and sample as per invoice.

A. E. F. (Paignton).—"I am sick of reading the bunkum there is in most newspapers." Moral, read JOHN BULL, the pick of the basket, warranted free from bunk.

V. G. (Hendon).—"I hope you will be able to see this joke without the aid of X-rays." As a matter of fact it was first perceived by our lady secretary, who blushed all over.

N. T. A. (Plumpton).—"I wouldn't live in London if I had ten pounds a week for nothing." Not if you received a personal request from the Lord Mayor so far to honour us?

NEW READER (Chanak).—"How could I make the acquaintance of a lonely girl of 20 with a view to corresponding?" Ask your mother, brother, or sister at home to find you a good one.

CONSTANT READER (Kings Lynn).—"Should such words as 'pshaw!' 'pish!' 'tchah!' be pronounced as written?" Yes, except that 'tchah' should be said through the nose. Try it.

PHILOLOGIST (Wokingham).—"What is the origin of the phrase: 'Teach your grandmother to suck eggs'?" It originated in an egg and a grandmother.

Huge rush for our
£3,000 Christmas Box
See Page 4.

SAMMY (Burton-on-Trent).—"My wife bit my arm yesterday. What can I do?" Give her something to eat.

HARRIER (Blackburn).—"Can a hare run faster than a racehorse?" Faster than some racehorses we know.

JEFF (Bury).—"What was Rufus doing when the Magna Charta was signed?" He was still dead.

ERNEST W. (Truro).—"Has 'the Styx' any reference to the jumping season?" No, but "hell" has.

M. L. (York).—"I have just received a dividend of sixpence from my rubber shares." Invest it in "Bullets," and let it win you a fortune.

S. S. (Chorley).—"It's curious how thorough women are when they take to swearing." They're thoroughly naughty, anyway.

ONE OF THE LADS (Plymouth).—"What is the cigarette consumption of England?" Strangely enough, we don't know.

OLD FASHIONED (Canterbury).—"I can see no beauties in the modern dancing." We see very few, but now and again we meet a peach.

FLOREAT ETONA (Shrewsbury).—"I can see no essential difference between baseball and rounders." There is a big difference. There is a gate, for one.

MRS. L. (Weston-S.-Mare).—"It is really terrible to see so many people playing games on Sunday." It doesn't terrify us—our nerves are like iron.

STATISTICIAN (Peckham).—"One sucker per minute is said to be born in America; what is the proportion in this country?" One every sixty seconds.

CORINTHIAN (Cheadle).—"Surely it is not true that boxing matches are ever arranged?" The matches, invariably; the results, occasionally.

PURIST (Ripon).—"Which is considered the standard accent in English pronunciation?" In America, Cockney and Mayfair, judging by some plays we have seen.

TETRARCH (Islington).—"Are rocking-horses made in any other colour than grey with white spots?" Not nowadays. The Tetrarch set the fashion.

ONLOOKER (Shrewsbury).—"So far the Socialists have done nothing so keep the House amused." That more than some of the late members did.

LAUGHTER LOVER (Rhondda).—"Why is it that all the best jokes are on the blue side?" Because they shock, and laughter is in reality a symptom of shock. Fact.

H. W. H. (Silloth).—"You may not think it, but I am the descendant of a great and famous family." From the tone of your insolent letter, it is not so much a descent as a fall.

T. J. A. (Accrington).—"If there is nothing in socialism, why do people like Wells and Shaw and Hall Caine fall for it?" Now mention somebody without money.

BERTIE L. (N. Waltham).—"I would like to ask a few questions relative to the proper handling of maternal parents by marriage." We never handle our mother-in-law, so can offer no advice.

L. F. S. (Nottingham).—"I object to the nasty remarks that people make about this town." These remarks (as they say in the daily press when they've missed something) did not appear in JOHN BULL.

BURNLEY.—"Does the Church of England receive financial assistance from the State?" Under Queen Anne's Bounty grants are made to indigent parishes which is more or less State aid.

(*Continued on page 26.*)

Small Ads. Worth Watching

Continued from page 3.

STAMMERING.—I cured myself. You can cure yourself (or your child). Partics. free.—Frank Hughes (J.B.), Ltd., 7, Southampton Row, W.C.1.

HOMŒOPATHIC CURATIVE INSTITUTE, 24, Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. Medical Advice and Treatment will be sent in reply to any inquiry by letter. Write now.

HOW TO STOP SMOKING.—Genuine Remedy, proved by testimonials. — Write, The Stanley Institute (J.B.), Ractes Road, London, S.W.6.

GOITRE, Enlarged Glands, Tonsils and Tumours quickly cured without operation. Testimonial proofs and advice free.—W. Duncan, M. H. Specialist (Dept. X.), Medical Hall, 44 Broadway, Grays.

THE MANUAL OF WISDOM.—Mothers and every married person should write at once for this wonderful and extremely valuable Medical Book, worth many pounds. Containing good, sound advice and special information, of the utmost importance. Should be in every home. Sent absolutely FREE on mentioning this paper. —Le Brasseur Surgical Mfg. Co., Ltd. (Dept. D.H.), 90-92, Worcester Street, Birmingham.

ASTHMA.—South African papers and Cigarettes for the relief and cure of Asthma, Bronchitis, Catarrh, etc. Thirty years' reputation. Liberal sample of each on receipt of 3d. in stamps to the Proprietors, 65, Elizabeth Street London, S.W.1

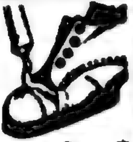
SUSPENSORY BANDAGES: highly recommended for athletes, cyclists, etc.; 1/6, post free; better qualities, 3/- and 4/6. Surgical goods of every description at lowest prices.—Catalogues sent post free on application to LE BRASSEUR SURGICAL MANUFACTURING CO., LTD. (Dept. B.R.), 90-92, Worcester Street, Birmingham. The World's Largest Manufacturers of Surgical Appliances.

OVERWORKED NERVES.—If your Store of Energy is lowered by overstrain or illness, send for a convincing trial supply of a wonderful new remedy that acts instantaneously on jaded nerves, restores lost vitality, and strengthens the system. — Enclose 6d. stamps to the Dumoret Laboratories (Box 3), 23, Foubert's Place, Regent Street, London, W.1.

MISCELLANEOUS.

SIXTY-FOUR PAGE BOOK about Herbs and how to use them, 2d. Send for one.—Trimnell, The Herbalist, Richmond Road, Cardiff.

HOW a 2d. stamp can add many hours of joy to your life. Send it to us for a free sample of "Mend-a-Tear," and learn to mend jags *without stitches*.—Leicester Rubber Co., Ltd., 23, Granby Mills, Leicester.



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The Famous French 'Xhare' Strong and pliable 10 minutes after application. Most useful and economical for permanently and invisibly mending all Leather and Rubber goods. For Boots, Shoes, Motor and Pram Hoods, Upholstery, Bags, Bookbinding, Tyres and Hose Pipes. No skill required. Indispensable in every home, garage and work-shop. Black, brown or grey. Sim le to use. Full directions sent. Send for a Tube To-day. Price only 2/9 post free. 3 for 6/-.
J. Robinson Sh elds & Co., 39, Kingsway, London, W.C.2

Dey & Pelton, Ltd.,

(*Thomas Henry Dey—Chairman.*)

TOOK & SHARE LEALERS.

All descriptions of Stocks and Shares Bought and Sold at close Market Prices—No Commission.

Advances made on approved Stocks & Shares at current rates.

The convenience of Cl ents is studied in every possible way and securities can be taken up through their Banker- if desired.

Bankers:—London Joint City & Midland Bank, Ltd., 35, Old Bond Street, London, W.1.

All enquiries sho ıld be addressed to:—
THE MANAGER,
DEY & PELTON, LTD.,
Egyptian House,
170/173, PICCADILLY,
LONDON, W.1.
Telephone: Regent 1025.

Ulcerated Leg

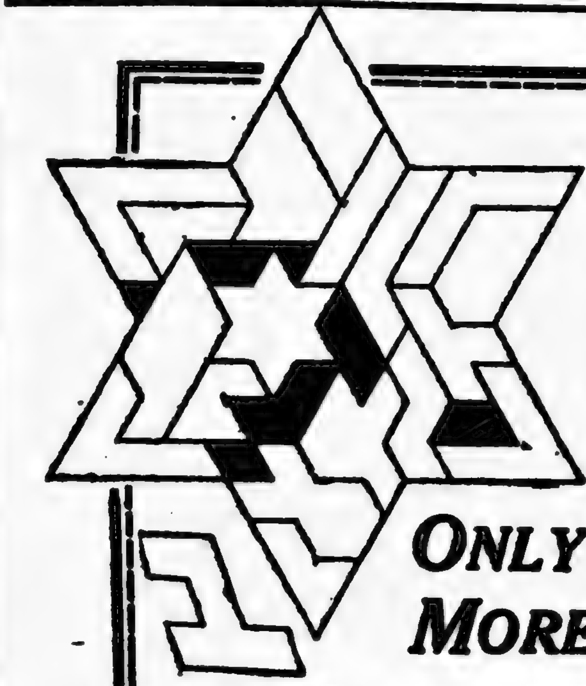
Would Not Heal Until Germolene was Used.

Mrs. Page, 35, Rupert Road, Upper Holloway, London, N.19, says:—"I caught my shin on the edge of a box and the result was a wound two inches square that showed the bone. It was stitched and dressed, but the stitches didn't hold, and for eight weeks I was in bed suffering terrible pain. Then I tried Germolene and the first application relieved. The limb healed up marvellously, and is now as sound as ever."

FOUR GOLD MEDALS AWARDED.

Prices 1s. 3d. and 3s. Of all Chemists.

Germolene



All but TWO Pieces——

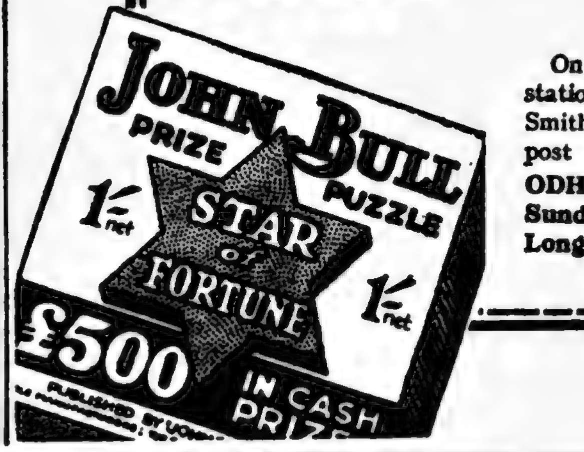
The eighteen white pieces in this diagram are arranged in such a way that TWO ARE LEFT OVER. Of these two pieces, only one is shown. The other piece with the remainder, you will find inside the Puzzle box.

ONLY A FEW MORE DAYS!

YOU have only a few days in which to send in your solution of the JOHN BULL "Star of Fortune" Puzzle and win one of the big prizes—£500 in all. Wednesday, December 27th, is the last day. Mr. Edgar Wallace, the famous novelist, will act as judge. We've almost completed the solution for you in the above diagram—but not quite correctly. Only two pieces left over now—don't let them beat you. Get your "Star of Fortune" to-day and go in and win.

JOHN BULL

Star of Fortune Puzzle ——— 1/-



On sale at all newsagents, stationers, toyshops and all Smith's bookstalls. Sent post free for 1s. 2d. from **ODHAMS PRESS, LTD. Sundries, Department A, Long Acre, London, W.C.2**

Clyde Bell's 24th Guide Book NOW READY.

The Book shows many new patterns of guns at greatly reduced prices. It also describes many valuable methods of Rabbit catching; Game Bird catching; Small Bird catching; Rat catching; Fish catching; and illustrates latest device for reducing report of small bore gun, with hundreds of other useful tips for sportsmen. Send 3d. only (half actual cost), for 52 page Guide Book; 300 Handsome Illustrations.

CLYDE BELL (Dept. J.H.), 129 [illegible] St., GLASGOW, W.

10/9 Monthly

49/6 CASH

is all you pay for a superbly made Mead Gramophone with massive solid oak cabinet gigantic richly coloured horn, extra large motor and unusually loud Sound Reproducer. Sent carriage paid on
10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL
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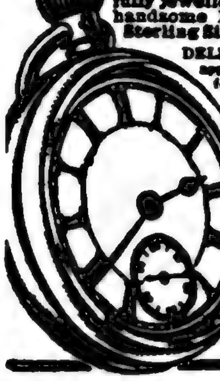
BUYS ONE FOR
XMAS

Tailor-made, good workmanship, and as smart a coat as any lady could wish to wear. Made in good quality ALL-WOOL Blanket Cloth, 46 and 48 inch length Floss stitched on Collar and Cuffs; in good style, with Belt complete. Colours: Navy, Brown, and Grey. Price only 35/-, on Easy Payments, 4/6 with order and 4/6 monthly; or if you prefer a superior Coat, we illustrate No. 391: Tailor-made in All-Wool Blanket Cloth, with Imitation Fur Collar and Cuffs, nicely gathered at sides. Tie Belt, etc. Specially recommended for good style and hard wear. Price 50/-. On Easy terms. 6/- deposit and 6/- monthly. Colours: Navy, Peacock and Brown. Length 46 and 48 inch. Satisfaction or deposit refunded. Send deposit for one of these Beautiful Winter Coats To-day.

Masters, 83, Hope Stores, Rye

GRAVES

GENUINE SILVER KEYLESS LEVER
A true timekeeper under all conditions. Perfectly adjusted, fully jewelled, & fitted in strong, handsome English Hall Marked Sterling Silver Cases. Price 50/-



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DELIVERED to all approved orders for 5/- with order. Balance in 9 monthly payments of 5/- if quite satisfied. Money back if at all disappointed.

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NOTHING BARRED
Six Leagues,
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Special SHORT LIST
14 to 1 3 Home Teams.
Gigantic increase of odds.
AGENTS WANTED.
Liberal Commission.

ROLLER BOGEY

The Ideal Entertainer for Winter Evenings.

Fascinating and exciting to young and old alike. Send to-day for one of these interesting, amusing and fascinating ROLLER BOGEYS, and make the long winter evenings full of enjoyment and fun.

Price only 1/3 post paid.
THE BRITISH MANUFACTURING CO.,
150, Otley Road, Bradford, Yorks. E.W.

JOHN BULL'S £3,000 XMAS BOX

A Free Ballot Ticket

WHAT to give for Christmas is once more exercising the minds of most of us. This year the useful, lasting gift is more in evidence than ever, and rightly so. Our advice to our readers is to give practical presents, and to be more emphatic still we would say give JOHN BULL Pens, because by so doing virtue may be rewarded with a huge cash prize of no less than £3,000!

You have doubtless heard of the GREAT Poster BALLOT with its huge £5,000 prize list. With every JOHN BULL Pen you purchase you will receive a 2s. 6d. Ballot Ticket, which you are asked to accept as a Christmas present from JOHN BULL.

With your ticket there comes a sheet of posters in miniature, fifteen in all. All you have to do is to pick out what you consider the ten best posters on the sheet and place them in their proper order of merit.

By devoting ten minutes to this very fascinating pastime you may win £3,000 first prize, £1,000 second prize, £850 third prize, £200 fourth prize or £100 fifth prize, to say nothing of the other cash prizes from £10 to £1—£5,000 in all.

Think what this offer means! The greatest Pen Bargain in the world (the Pens at 4s. 3d., 6s., 7s. and 8s. 9d., respectively are worth at least twice the price asked) and an opportunity to win one of these huge prizes.

A word of warning: So popular is the offer that the tickets, which have been restricted to 10,000, are being rapidly snapped up. Get your pen early. See page 4.

WHAT JOHN BULL PAYS

Household Benefits.

£300—damage by fire.
£600—death of husband and wife due to fire.
£300—in case of death of one under similar circumstances.
£250 or **£125**—in respect of each for loss of one limb or eye under similar circumstances.
£100—damage by explosion of gas or domestic boilers.
£100—damage by hot-water pipes or heating apparatus.
£200—damage by aeroplanes, airships or other aerial craft.
£300—damage by riots and civil commotion.
£100—damage by storm, tempest or flood.
£100—damage by lightning, thunderbolt or earthquake.
£1,000—in case of death of husband and wife by violence caused by burglars or housebreakers.
£500—if one is killed under similar circumstances.
£500 or **£250**—in respect of each for loss of one limb or eye under similar circumstances.
£10—Medical Fees.
£6 per week for both or £3 per week for either up to 4 weeks, for disablement caused by burglars, housebreakers, or fire.
£2 per week maximum rent during reinstatement (not exceeding 26 weeks).

Accidents in Home & Garden.

£250—loss of life.
£250—loss of two limbs or both eyes or one limb and one eye.
£125—loss of one limb or one eye.
£3 per week up to four weeks for disablement by fractured limb.
£1 per week (after the first week) up to four weeks for **ALL ACCIDENTS.**

Emergency Benefit.

Smallpox—£3 per week (payable up to 6 weeks) should registered reader be totally disabled as a result of contracting Smallpox.

CUT HERE

J.B. 16 12 22. POST THIS COUPON TO "JOHN BULL."
To "John Bull" Registration Department, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

I have sent an order form to my newsagent for the regular weekly delivery of "John Bull." Please register me as a regular reader.

Reader's Name ....
(IN CAPITAL LETTERS.)
Address ....
....
Name and Address of Newsagent ....
Date.................. ....

Use 1d. Stamp. Don't seal envelope. A full Policy certifying registration will be sent upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope bearing 1d. stamp.

CUT HERE

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY.
J.B. 16 12.22. HAND THIS COUPON TO YOUR NEWSAGENT.
To (Name of Newsagent) ....
Address ....
....
Please deliver or reserve JOHN BULL for me weekly until further notice.
Signature ....
Address ....
Date ....

THE SHOP WINDOW

EMPLOYMENT.

The "Small Ads. Worth Watching" contain a number of interesting items. The R.A.F. Recruiting Depot has an advertisement in that column calling for men of good education and physique for Stores Accounting duties. The prospects of promotion are good for men of the right type.

CHEAP RAIL FARES.

The S.E. & C. Rly. give particulars of special facilities during the Christmas holidays. They issue cheap 15-day tickets to Paris and Brussels; also cheap long week-end tickets to Boulogne, Calais, Ostend, and Flushing. Other facilities include cheap tickets between London and the English seaside resorts and principal English towns.

BLUE SERGE EASILY FIRST.

Having taken a census of their orders from JOHN BULL readers, Messrs. S. A. Barry & Co. find that there is by far the greatest demand for the blue serge suit. This is made of indigo-dyed wool, London shrunk. Messrs. Barry usually require seven to ten days for fulfilling orders, but will arrange that all instructions received up to the morning of the 18th will be executed before Christmas. After that date, they will be delivered in the order of rotation—immediately after the holidays. They are very keen on prompt delivery.

A TURF ACCOUNTANT'S COURTESY.

The well-known turf accountants, White, Fisher & Co., have kindly consented to their advertisement being moved from its usual position in order to permit the Hospital Charity Appeal to appear there. Their advertisement will be found on this page.

A SPLENDID REMEDY.

Those suffering from asthma and bronchitis will secure great benefit from the use of Dr. Hair's asthma cure. It is also excellent for troublesome, tickling coughs—which it usually cures after three or four doses.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Several firms advertise useful gifts for Christmas—amongst these being:—

Watts, Son & Co.—Ladies' or gents' gold-filled watches, at £1, post free.

Mead Cycle Co.—Gramophone, 49s. 6d., cash; or 10s. 9d. monthly.

Masters.—Ladies' all-wool blanket cloth coats, for 35s., or on easy terms.

Of course, "Black Cat" cigarettes and Clarnico Lily Brazils will also make excellent Christmas presents.

CHEAP BOOTS.

The prices quoted by the Strand Boot Co. carry us back to the pre-war times.

AN INTERESTING BOOK.

Clyde Bell advertises a book for eightpence which should interest all lovers of the "out-of-doors."

JOHN BULL'S LETTER BAG

(Continued from page 24.)

BLUE BAG (Perth).—"My heartiest congratulations on your new JOHN BULL!" Only just seen it?

MERSTHAM WILLIE (Sutton).—"Some of the Argentine ranchers are having a bad time." Instead of losing hundreds of thousands at Monte Carlo they can only afford to lose tens of thousands.

HOW (Falkland Islands).—"People seem to forget us." We don't, anyway. But you're rather out of the way, aren't you?

TEN SPADES (Horsham).—"I hope you are not offended with me." Bless you, no. Who are you?

BYE-PATH (Catterick).—"We start making our puddings in August." About the same time as they make railway buffet mince pies.

JOHN OF LAMBETH (Lambeth).—"The Old Vic. is nearly unique." There is no such quantity as "nearly unique." A thing is either unique or it isn't.

UNCLE BONES (Walsall).—"My work mates swear by JOHN BULL." Great stuff!

A. P. (Leeds).—"I have not had a reply to my letter." And we haven't had your letter, so we're both disappointed.

QUEEN'S PARK (Hammersmith) "How can you account for new stars?" That's one thing we don't have to account for; stamps, twine, paste, petty cash—but not stars.

JOLLY TAR (Esher).—"Give me your views on enclosed letter." It is the hoary old Spanish prisoner swindle. Send no money.

BONNY MARY (Stirling).—"Is there a society from which I can get money without working?" Mary, there isn't—except human society. We've tried to find one for years, but, alas! without success.

CHARLIE (Torquay).—"What can you do when a man owes you money?" Sing to him till he pays.

LAST CENT (Heathfield).—"My one satisfaction is that I have never paid income-tax." Your forbearance doesn't seem to have prevented your going broke.

BERTIE (Bayswater).—"Women have a queer idea of beauty." So we judge by the kind of things they marry.

ON GUARD (Knightsbridge).—"How long ought a man to walk out with a girl?" Until it starts raining.

L. O. W.—"Why associate the black man with the Chinamen?" We don't. They have got themselves into the mess.

E. W. B. (Bath).—"Who originated the Santa Claus idea?" We rather think we had a hand in it. See our offer of a Christmas Box given away with a JOHN BULL Pen.

NELL (Todmorden).—"I've tried every treatment, but I cannot stop one of my teeth from aching." Obstinate little blighter.

F. G. H. (Grimsby).—"Why is it necessary to hold conference after conference to find out how much Germany can pay?" Because they are so exhilarating to those who attend.

GEORGE (Aberdeen).—"Whenever I sit down to write a letter to you I find I have very little to say." We had the same impression after reading your last effort.

L. M. (Stockport).—"I am 35, and fond of fresh air, and am thinking of sleeping out of doors this winter." We haven't the slightest objection except to the shiver you send down our spine.

(Many replies unavoidably held over.)

ORIGINALITY

MR. J. MURPHY, 31, Salisbury Avenue, Barking, who won the £250 first prize in "Bullets" No. 466, is a marine engineer, who, in his 42 years of life, has encountered "plenty of head seas and winds"; the prize will mean "fair winds and smooth seas" for him, his wife and two children. Mr. Murphy relies entirely on his own efforts in competitions, and his winning "Bullet" "Taxing Capital—Patching Trousers From Coat," was very original. On this vital point of originality he says, "This winning effort was not evolved without a good deal of thought, for it was easy to make 'Bullets' on the example, but they were 'Bullets' that hundreds more would send in."

RESULT OF "BULLETS" COMPETITION No. 467.

FIRST PRIZE OF £250:

Mr. [illegible],
13, [illegible] Street, Glasgow

Example:—The Majority
Bullet:—"Stand" For "The King."

SECOND PRIZE OF £20

Captain H. [illegible], 64, [illegible] Square, Dublin.
Example:—Bonar Law's Task
Bullet:—Re-establishing Britain "Before World."

HIRD PRIZE OF £10:

L. THURGOOD, 75, [illegible] Road, Norwich.
Example:—A New House
Bullet:—Thoughtful Postman Knocked Lightly.

10 Prizes of £5 each:

John D. Allan, 46, Queen's Road, Caversham, Reading:
All Agree—[illegible] Wants "[illegible]."
J. W. Love, 208, Main Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow:
Worth His Salt—Rebuffed—Tries Next Door.
B. Clifford [illegible], Helperby, York:
Faithful Heart—[illegible] Despite The Extremists.
J. Cooper, 1, Claremont Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne:
The Majority—Must Keep "Compact."
Miss L. Peek, 14, [illegible], Penydarren, Merthyr Tydvil:
Past A Joke—[illegible] Using Jemmy.
William Watt, 40, Wilderhaugh, Galashiels, N.B.:
All Agree—Prohibition Party Fully Represented.
Miss N. Haylock, 26, Eden Street, Kettering, Northants:
Letting The [illegible]—[illegible] Himself Only.
Harold Hudson, 47, Thompson Street, Shipley, Yorks:
Worth His Salt—"Brewer" Keeping "Hair On."
L. E. Offord, 19, [illegible] Rd., Willesden, N.W.10:
Unadorned—With Laurels—[illegible] Greeks.
W. E. [illegible], 58, Castle Street, Southwark, London, S.E. 1:
Last Chance—Only Drinker Makes It.

10 Prizes of £2 10s. each:

F. A. Maude, 40, Connaught Street, Dublin:
The Very Thing—The "Do Care" Spirit.
R. Marsh, River View, [illegible] Road, Christchurch, Newport, Mon.:
The Very Thing—Lasting Peace—Not Armistice.
H. Alger, Longhill, East Liss, Hants:
Last Chance—Don't Grouse, Snap It.
J. H. Hare, The Cottages, Woolgreaves, Sandal, Wakefield:
Unadorned—Rugged Beauty Best Chance.
G. Underhill, 83, South Road, Handsworth, Birmingham:
In The Witness Box—Judge Discovers Rival Comedian.
Mrs. F. Kennedy, 167, High Street, Ponders End:
Modest—[illegible] "[illegible]."
H. Schofield, 7, School Terrace, Lowtown, Pudsey, Nr. Leeds:
Beginning To End—"Wishing We'd Never Gone."
H. W. Dyson, 26, Bond Street, Dewsbury, Yorks:
What Next—Generation Earns—We've Spent.
Albert E. [illegible], 49, Willington Terrace, Rosehill, Willington Quay-on-Tyne:
Unpopular—[illegible] "[illegible]" Display.
E. Deacon, 192, Park Road, [illegible], Lincs:
Cordial Invitation—Conference Greets Scientist To-day.

A complete list of the [illegible] Competition No. 467 [illegible] stamped and addressed envelope. [illegible] be published in [illegible]

A list of all [illegible] can be seen at the offices of "John Bull."

10 PRIZES OF £5
25 PRIZES OF 10/-
100 PRIZES OF 5/-

'BULLETS' 1ST PRIZE
£250
2nd PRIZE £20
3rd PRIZE £10

10 PRIZES OF £2·10
500 PRIZES OF 2/6
2000 TARGET PRIZES

2000 POPULAR NOVELS

NEXT WEEK "BULLETS" FIRST PRIZE WILL BE INCREASED TO £500.

LIST OF EXAMPLES FOR "BULLETS" COMPETITION No. 469.

CHRISTMAS DINNER
FILLING THE STOCKING
BETWEEN FRIENDS
TRANQUILLITY
BLAMELESS LIFE
IN TWO MINDS
NEXT BEST
KISSING
IN THE MINORITY
TIDY FIGURE
GOOD RESULTS
DOUBTFUL
ON THIN ICE
PLEASING MAID
WELL DRESSED
AS OTHERS SEE US
BACK AND FRONT
HASTY JAR
IN SMALL DOSES
A NOVELTY
WRAPPED IN THOUGHT
LATEST ARRIVAL
NO GOOD
UP IN ARMS
WHEN DUSTMAN CALLS
HOPE DEFERRED
WHEN ASKED
ON A VISIT
ON PAPER
AT A PINCH
ACTING THE GOAT
SINK OR SWIM

"BULLETS" RULES.

1. The First Prize will be awarded for what, in the opinion of the Judges in consultation with the Editor, is the best "Bullet" received, and the other prizes in order of merit, the test being cleverness, aptness, and originality.

2. Bullets must be plainly written on one of the coupons, and only two attempts may be written on each coupon.

3. All four coupons may be used, and a postal order enclosed at the rate of 6d. for each coupon made use of, which must be made payable to John Bull and crossed "and Co." Competitors must write their names and addresses and the date of sending the order on the back of the postal order, the number of which must be duly noted on each coupon submitted. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. All coupons arriving too late to be judged with absolute thoroughness will be duly returned.

5. The Editor undertakes that every "Bullet" received shall have careful consideration by a competent staff of qualified judges.

6. The Editor's decision on any matter of dispute arising in connection with this competition must be accepted as final and legally binding in all respects, and acceptance of this rule is an express condition of entry.

SPECIAL [illegible] PRIZES:—[illegible] for £5, £3 and £2 respectively will be paid to the [illegible] of the three [illegible] "Bullets" [illegible] in Competition No. 469 have purchased their copies of "John Bull."

"BULLETS" MADE EASIER—NO LETTER RESTRICTIONS.

All you have to do is to choose any of the Thirty-two examples given. Then give any Two, Three, or Four words having some bearing on the example chosen. The Two, Three, or Four words you give can EACH begin with any letter in the alphabet. This example will guide you: Example:—Our Business. Bullet:—Wants "Gingering," then "Preserving." The entry fee for one coupon is 6d. If sending more than one, enclose a postal order at the rate of 6d. for each coupon made use of.

ADDRESS ALL COUPONS TO "Bullets" No 469, "John Bull," Long Acre London, W.C. 2.

No._____ Closing Date, Thursday, December 21.
Example ____________________
Bullet
Example ____________________
Bullet
(469) P.O No.________
I agree to enter this Competition in accordance with the rules and conditions announced on this page.
With 1 coupon, send P.O. for 6d.
Signed ____________________
Address ____________________

If unable to secure extra coupons you can write your "Bullets" on plain paper.

No._____ Closing Date, Thursday, December 21.
Example ____________________
Bullet
Example ____________________
Bullet
(469) P.O. No.________
I agree to enter this Competition in accordance with the rules and conditions announced on this page.
With 2 coupons send P.O. for 1s.
Signed ____________________
Address ____________________

No._____ Closing Date, Thursday, December 21.
Example ____________________
Bullet
Example ____________________
Bullet
(469) P.O. No.________
I agree to enter this competition in accordance with the rules and conditions announced on this page.
With 3 coupons, send P.O. for 1s. 6d.
Signed ____________________
Address ____________________

No._____ Closing Date, Thursday, December 21.
Example ____________________
Bullet
Example ____________________
Bullet
(469) P.O No.________
I agree to enter this Competition in accordance with the rules and conditions announced on this page.
With 4 coupons, send P.O. for 2s.
Signed ____________________
Address ____________________

SELECTION OF EXAMPLES FOR "BULLETS" COMPETITION No. 470.

MY NEW YEAR WISH—A PANTOMIME—JOLLY—HOME AGAIN—WHITE MAN'S BURDEN—THE END—RIPE FOR MISCHIEF—MOST NEEDFUL—BROADCASTING—FLAPPER'S GAME—SWEET SIMPLICITY—DOUBTFUL COMPANY—DRY ROT—WHY SHE SMILED—THINKING—A SNOWBALL—FATHER TIME—A LARGE FAMILY—SHAM FIGHT—A FAIRY.

These examples can be made use of on the Coupons on this page, and must reach us on or before THURSDAY, JANUARY 4th. All Coupons so used MUST be marked clearly with the number 470 in the top left-hand corner, and envelopes containing these Coupons must be addressed "Bullets" No. 470, John Bull, Long Acre, London, W.C. 2. Such Coupons must not contain any of the Thirty-two Examples for Competition No. 469.

The original cheque for £250 awarded to the first prize-winner in "Bullets" Competition No. 466 can now be seen in the window of Mr. R. Clark, Newsagent, 97, East Street, Barking.

THE CURE FOR

ASTHMA & BRONCHITIS.

PRESCRIBED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

One of our most eminent physicians, a great specialist in asthma, says: "It is unfortunate that the current idea among general practitioners as to asthma is that it is incurable; for **there is no distressing and disabling diseased condition more amenable to correct handling than asthma.** Every case of uncomplicated asthma, properly handled, will improve, most will get well." Again, he says: **"I have not seen one who, if there were no serious complications, no matter how long the duration of the asthma, could not be cured. . ."**

THE GREATEST ENGLISH PHYSICIANS

have used and prescribed Dr. Hair's Asthma Cure, while Doctors are everywhere prescribing it for their patients and acknowledging its phenomenal success.

THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN,

Sir Morell Mackenzie,

had such experience of Dr. Hair's Asthma Cure as to justify his acknowledgment of its beneficial effects.

Professor G. J. ALLMAN, M.D., F.R.S., LL.D.,

Ex-President of the British Association (the greatest scientific society in the World), and himself a sufferer from Asthma—said he had used Dr. Hair's Asthma Cure with "marked success."

Dr. Hair says that his treatment **"will enable the patient in two or three days to sleep in bed without suffering, and if the directions are followed, Health, Strength and Flesh will be rapidly restored."**

The Clergy are equally emphatic. The Rev. J. H. Bumstead, Vicar of Hambleton, says: **"Asthma can be cured, and Dr. Hair's medicine will cure it."**

The Rev. J. L. Herbert, Rector of Disserth, Llandrindod, describes Dr. Hair's Medicine as **"An excellent cure without any ill-effects."**

Photograph] [*London Stereoscopic Co.*

THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN,
SIR MORELL MACKENZIE,
who said he knew many people benefited by using Dr. Hair's Asthma Cure.

Amongst countless others who have testified to the success of Dr. Hair's Treatment are the Wife of the Chaplain to King Edward and Queen Victoria,

Canon P. W. Wilkinson,
General Sir H. S. Anderson, K.C.B.,
General H. A. Sykes,
General J. P. Goode,
General W. H. Whitlock,
General G. Smart,
Colonel W. C. McDougall,
Canon A. Atkinson,
Lady Sargent,
Lady J. A. Perkins,
Lady C. Bertie,
Lady E. F. Miller,
Margaret Lady Heytesbury,
Baroness F. Holli,
The Hon. Mrs. M. E. Butler,
etc.

The price of Dr. Hair's Asthma and Bronchitis Cure is 5/- Of BOOTS', TAYLOR'S, TIMOTHY WHITE'S and other Chemists, or direct (postage 9d. extra) of

DR. HAIR'S ASTHMA CURE, LTD. (Dept. 69), High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

FREE BOOKLET

Fill in and post this Coupon NOW!

To DR. HAIR'S ASTHMA CURE, LTD. (Dept. 69), High Holborn, London, W.C. 1.

Please send me free and post paid a copy of the latest edition of Dr. Hair's Booklet on Asthma, Bronchitis and Catarrh.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

(Also write Name and Address in Capitals on separate sheet of paper.)
You can send this Coupon in an unsealed envelope for 1d.
J.B. 16/12/22

THE

CITY LIFE

Assurance Co., Ltd.

HEAD OFFICE:
CITY LIFE HOUSE,
Old Jewry, London, E.C.2
Telephone: CITY 9543.

Assets Exceed -	**£1,000,000**
Premium Income Exceeds	**£350,000**
Claims Paid Exceed -	**£1,600,000**
Advances Made Exceed	**£2,250,000**

Managing Director.
ARTHUR E. TURNER.

---

they say this is YOU

by
A MAN WHO HAS HIS DOUBTS.

They say that the Public has the Mind of a Child—that's *You*. They say that the Public can't discriminate—that's *You*. They say that the Public will buy any kind of reading that has a famous name attached thereto—that's *You* again. They say that the Public must be written down to, spoon-fed, and treated like a babe in arms.

Did you realise that *You* were like that? Neither did I. My answer to those who tell me that the Public can't discriminate is—PAN. PAN is a Magazine that transgresses every law of Magazine tradition. You will find no famous names on its cover, but on its title-page you find this—*'PAN'S policy is to print each and every story because it is worth printing, whether the author be obscure or famous.'* That's PAN, *the* Fiction Magazine *par excellence*. Buy it and judge for yourself. The Christmas issue, now on sale, is the best fiction value ever offered in an illustrated magazine. It's an enlarged number, containing seventeen superb stories, and the price is ONE SHILLING "Frozen Gold," the finest Alaskan serial of all time, starts in this issue. Get the Christmas Number to-day.

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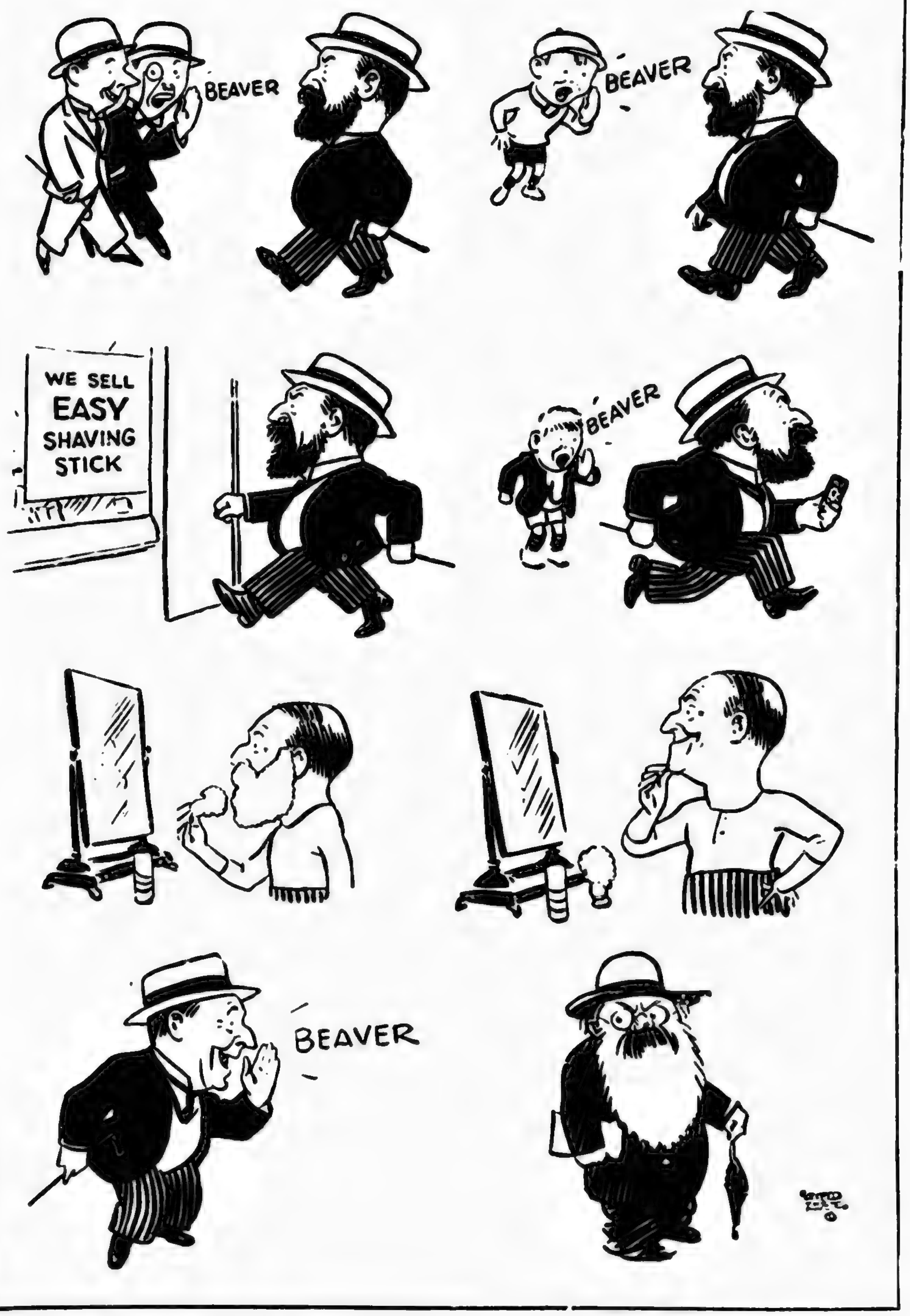
JOHN BULL'S XMAS XTRA

THE BEAVER UNBEAVERED AND BEAVERING.


BEAVER
BEAVER
WE SELL EASY SHAVING STICK
BEAVER
BEAVER

Of all Grocers, Stores, Oilmen, Chandlers, Canteens, etc.

6d Per Stick.

LEVER
LEVER
LEVER
LEVER
LEVER
SHAVING
EASY
STICK
SHAVING EASY STICK

LEVER'S EASY SHAVING STICK

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED. PORT SUNLIGHT.

E114–34.

10 Good Reasons why You should Take up PELMANISM

1. Because in these days of keen competition an Efficient Mind is essential to success in any walk of life.
2. Because it is your duty to yourself and to those dependent on you to increase your EARNING POWERS.
3. Because this fascinating study (occupying only half-an-hour a day for a few months) will bring out the BEST that is in you—develop unsuspected ABILITIES — strengthen your CHARACTER—make you WORTH MORE.
4. Because your MEMORY will be improved beyond belief.
5. Because your powers of OBSERVATION will be many times increased.
6. Because you will learn to CONCENTRATE and be cured of Mind Wandering and Careless Thinking.
7. Because your MENTAL ENERGY will be aroused and directed into profitable channels.
8. Because you will learn how to THINK LOGICALLY and to express your thoughts CLEARLY and CONVINCINGLY.
9. Because you will build up SELF CONFIDENCE and therefore will be enabled to accomplish vastly more than you could possibly hope to do by any other means whatsoever.
10. Because over 500,000 Pelmanists—people engaged in every known occupation—testify to the wonderful success of the Course.

The Rush to Enrol for the Course.

WEEK by week thousands of men and women representing practically all professions and callings are enrolling for the New Pelman Course of Mind and Memory Training. They realise the advantages of self-improvement and consequently of self-advancement which this marvellous system offers. **Are YOU among their number?**

If you are not yet a Pelmanist—why not start the Winter well by devoting yourself to the study and practice of Pelmanism—the most enjoyable as well as the most profitable "Hobby" you could possibly take up?

The Power that Pelmanism Gives.

Do not run away with the idea that Pelmanism is only meant for so-called "Brain-workers"—writers, clergymen, students and so on. It benefits **everybody**, and at the Pelman Institute may be seen thousands of letters from all sorts and conditions of men and women bearing witness to the marvellous benefits they have derived from the Course. A few are reproduced on this page.

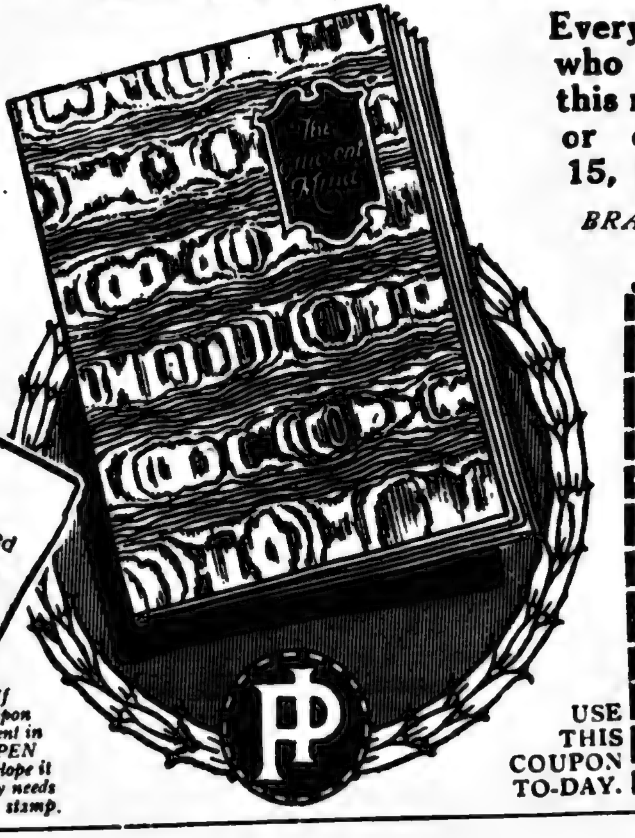
Whatever your occupation and **whatever** your social position Pelmanism will be worth many times its cost to you. *Why not investigate?*

Remarkable 48 Page Book FREE.

A copy of the "Efficient Mind," one of the most arresting and helpful books ever written, will be sent free on application. It contains many new and interesting facts concerning Personal Efficiency. It also contains portraits in photogravure and opinions of well known public men and women on Pelmanism, together with full details of the Course, fees, etc.

Every reader (over 16 years of age) of JOHN BULL who wants to make a success of life should read this remarkable book. Fill up and post the coupon, or call personally at the Pelman Institute, 15, Pelman House, Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1.

BRANCHES: PARIS. NEW YORK. MELBOURNE. DURBAN. BOMBAY. etc.



If coupon is sent in OPEN envelope it only needs ½d. stamp.

USE THIS COUPON TO-DAY.

To the Secretary,
THE PELMAN INSTITUTE,
15, Pelman House, Bloomsbury St., London, W C.1.

Please send me FREE and Post Free a copy of "THE EFFICIENT MIND."

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

OCCUPATION

Xmas. .... (Please Write PLAINLY.)

The Course has certainly made a new man of me. My salary has increased 40 per cent. since completing the instruction. **My work always seems to be a pleasure to me,** and I do it better and more quickly.
SALESMAN **(R.16405)**

I am deeply indebted to the Pelman Institute for the good they have done me, as, since taking up the Course, I have more than **trebled my income,** which is due solely to your teaching.
CLERK **(L.18180)**

I have never regretted having taken the Pelman Course. **It acts as a sort of backbone to all I do.** Business is more successful than ever before.
SHOPKEEPER **(S.6167)**

I can now speak before a hall full of fellow-workers: before, my heart was in my boots as well as in my mouth. I am realising my true self for the first time.
PLUMBER (D.8382)

I have received **two substantial increases of salary** in the short space of six months, and have very bright prospects for the future.
CLERK (L.24278

THE · UNIVERSAL · STORES — THE · UNIVERSAL · STORES

SENSATIONAL GRAMOPHONE OFFER

A 6-GUINEA MACHINE with FREE GIFT of RECORDS (6 Selections) for 50/-

THE Universal Stores—the World-famed Bargain House of Manchester—have again pleasure in announcing that they are able to put **before the British public a new and entirely improved model of Hornless Gramophone of high-class make, with the latest improvements.**

Although **these machines** are equal in every respect to those costing 10 guineas or more, we are giving the opportunity to readers of "JOHN BULL" to obtain these **magnificent instruments** at this **extraordinary low advertising price.** Please note the specification of the machine, which is guaranteed **high-class throughout,** and cannot be purchased elsewhere for less than six guineas. **Now is the time** to buy Gramophones, as the days are getting shorter; the long winter evenings are coming in, and whilst you draw your chair close to the fire **this machine will entertain and amuse you** by playing to you the best band music, your favourite songs, the finest operas, sacred music—in fact, any instrumental or vocal selection your heart desires. **A delightful musical instrument** that will give you real pleasure.

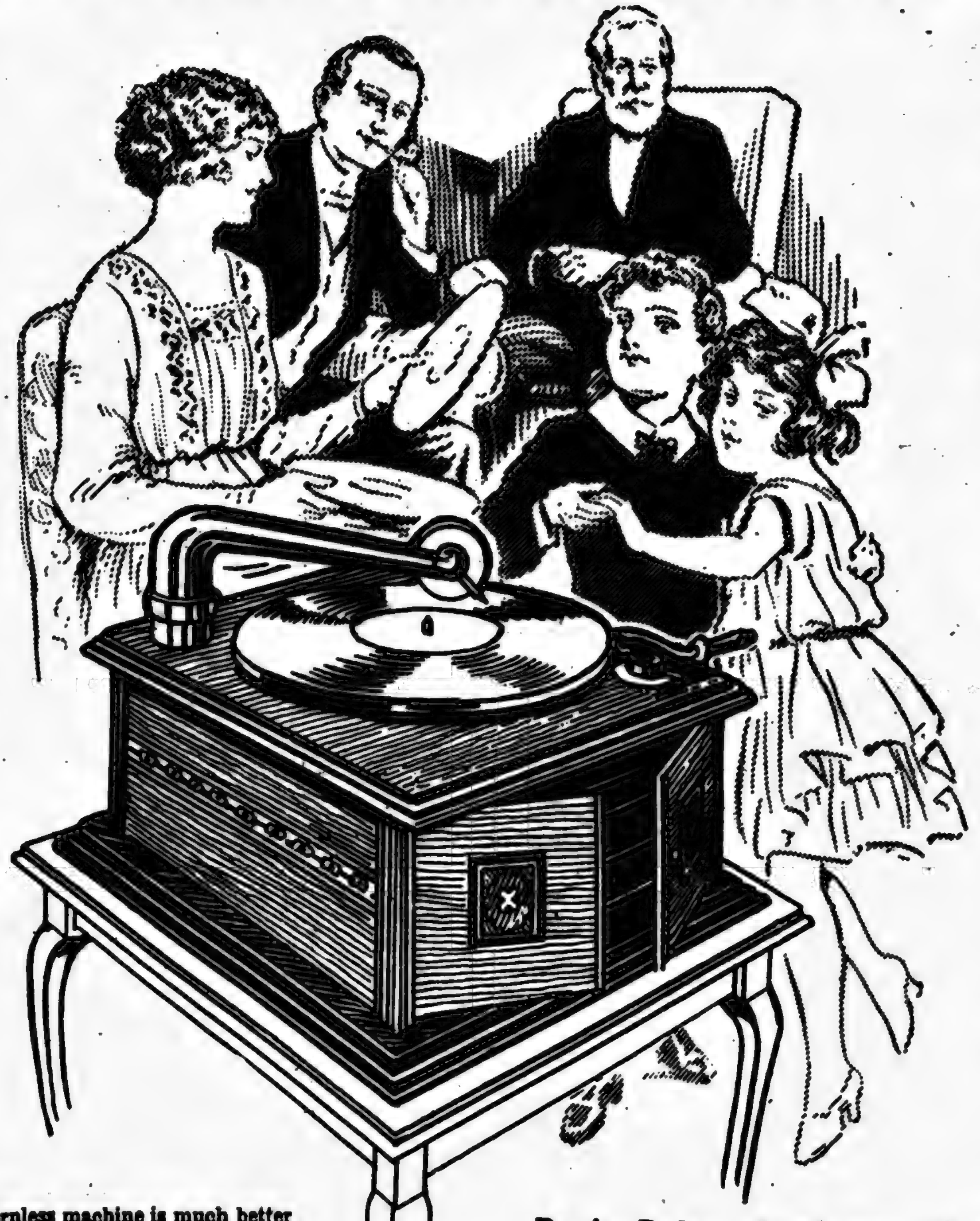
LARGEST · MODERN · MAIL · ORDER · HOUSE

SPECIFICATION:

Solid Oak Cabinet polished dark antique, artistically embellished with ornamentations on doors and sides.

Powerful and very silent-running motor, with double record spring, 10-inch turntable that will take up to 12-inch records, nickel silver plated swan-necktonearm, **special concert soundbox** with insulated rubber back, speed regulator. Oak grille in front of machine and **double folding doors** on piano hinges to increase or diminish sound at will.

Size of machine approximately: 16-in. long, 14½-in. wide, and 8 in. deep.



Our price for these machines, for a limited time, is 50/- only, which includes a FREE GIFT of new 10-in. Records (6 selections) and a box of 200 needles sent well packed (box and packing free) to any address in the British Isles.

If unable to send full cash at once, secure the machine now by sending a small deposit; the balance can be paid at your own convenience.

Money returned in full if not delighted with your bargain.

The tone of a good hornless machine is much better than a horn machine with its metallic vibration, besides the saving of room and its portability.

Don't Delay—Send your Order Now.
Safe delivery Guaranteed.

The Universal Stores
MANCHESTER
Ltd.
Orme Buildings,
The Parsonage,
(J.B.12), MANCHESTER

SPECIAL BARGAIN OFFER OF RECORDS FOR ALL GRAMOPHONE OWNERS.

A BEAUTIFUL ART ALBUM, complete with 12 DOUBLE-SIDED 2/6 RECORDS (making 24 selections) and box of 200 best quality needles, sent carriage paid for **ONLY £1.** The selection of Records to be left to us, but we guarantee a good all round selection of latest Songs, Bands, etc. Every record is warranted new and unscratched, entirely British made, and are the best Records on the market.

Treasury Notes must be sent by registered post. Postal Orders and Cheques should be crossed "& Co.," and made payable to the Universal Stores Ltd.

(E.W.)

THE · UNIVERSAL · STORES — THE · UNIVERSAL · STORES

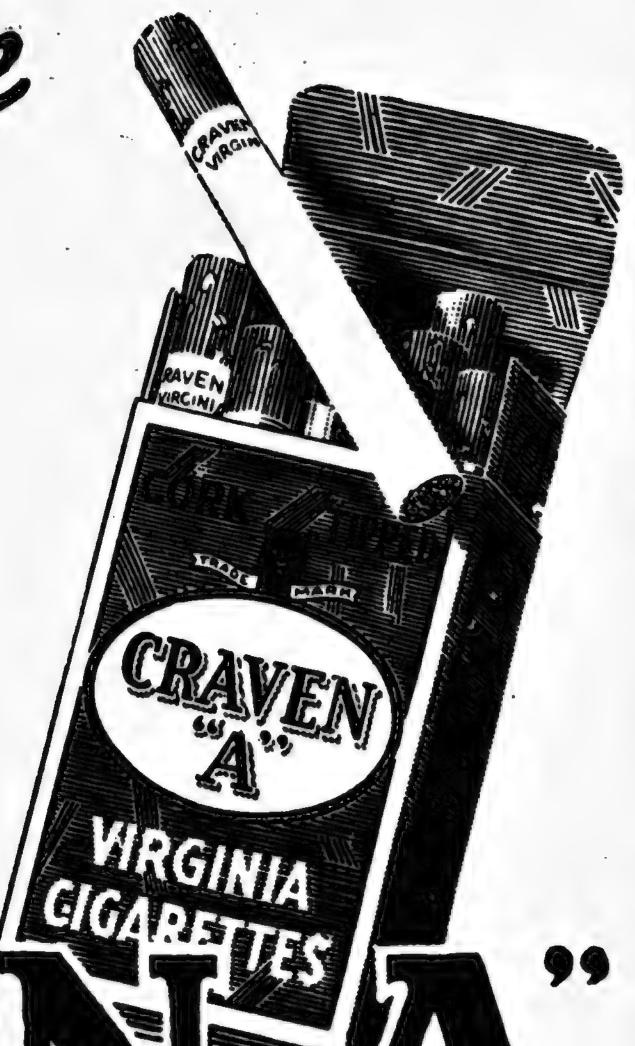
The Cork-Tip makes all the difference

"COOL and Sweet" is everybody's verdict. The reason is that the cork tip prevents wet ends, ensures a cool smoke and preserves the real flavour of the pure matured Virginia tobacco, guaranteed free from adulteration of any kind. Medical opinion pronounces the cork - tipped cigarette healthy, and the *Craven "A" Cork-tip* is affixed in such a way as to

PREVENT SORE THROAT.

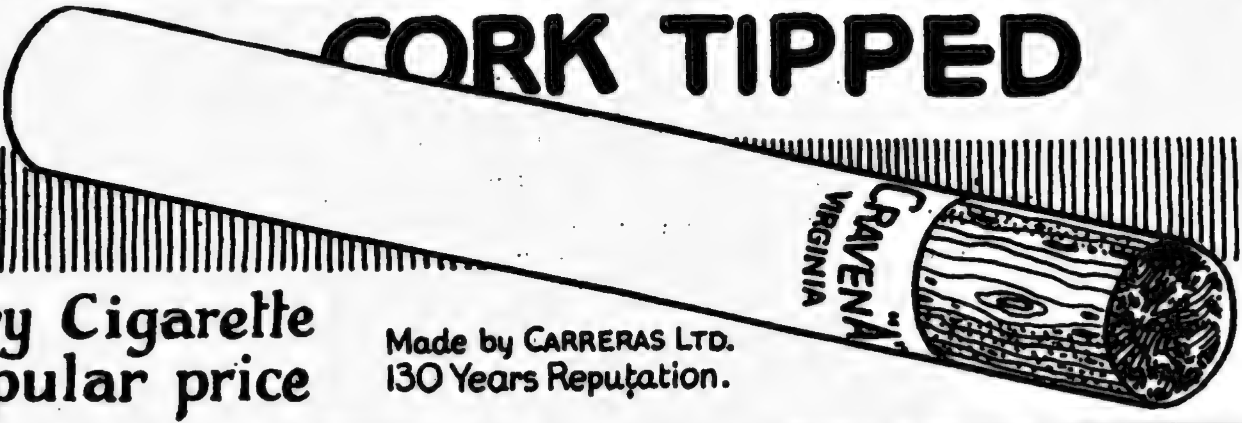
The luxury of a better cigarette is now possible at your price.

6d. for 10; 1/- for 20; 2/6 for 50; 5/- for 100


CRAVEN VIRGINIA
CORK TIPPED
TRADE MARK
CRAVEN "A"
VIRGINIA CIGARETTES

CRAVEN "A"

CORK TIPPED


CRAVEN "A" VIRGINIA

10 for 6D

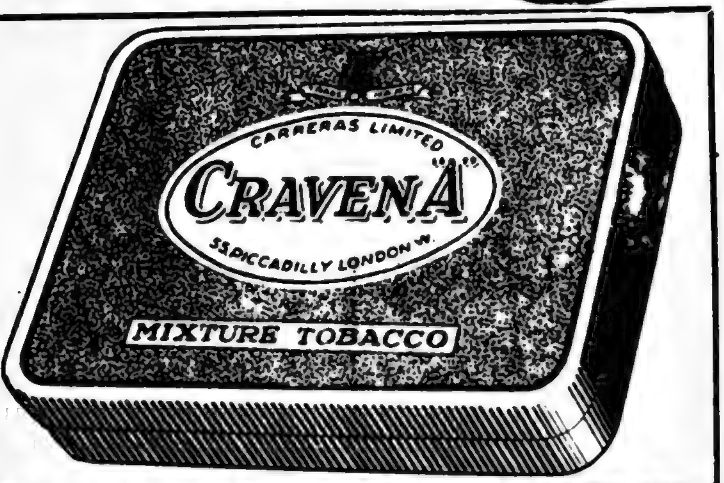
A Luxury Cigarette
at a popular price

Made by CARRERAS LTD.
130 Years Reputation.

Buy your favourite tobacco in the convenient pocket-size tin

The fragrance of Craven "A" smoking mixture, its rich and perfect flavour, its coolness and its smoothness are known and appreciated by thousands of enthusiastic pipe smokers.

It is now obtainable in a flat red tin which fits the pocket and keeps the tobacco fresh. Ask your tobacconist for Craven "A" next time you buy tobacco.


CARRERAS LIMITED
CRAVEN "A"
55 PICCADILLY LONDON W.
MIXTURE TOBACCO

4oz. airtight tin 4/4; 2 oz. pocket size tin 2/2; 1oz. pkt. 1/1

CRAVEN "A" SMOKING MIXTURE

Bank of England
11341 pay the Bearer
the Sum of Five Pounds
London Oct 1922
For the Gov. and Comp. of the BANK OF ENGLAND
Five

£5 down will secure you a Tripp

MOTOR CYCLE

Only £5 deposit, and the balance in 12 monthly payments of only £1 17s. 6d. ! Such is the "Tripp" proposition—and this includes **free delivery** and **a policy by the London Assurance.**

The "Tripp" is veritably an engineering triumph, is built in one of the largest motor cycle factories in the Kingdom, is designed on the most up-to-date principles, and incorporates one of the finest two-stroke engines in the world—the Connaught.

It is simplicity itself to run—a child can drive it—its running costs are negligible—your house is your garage.

This wonder machine will do **30 miles per hour,** and will travel **200 miles on a gallon of petrol.**

THE CASH PRICE IS 23 GUINEAS.

(carr. paid)

Send a Post Card
for full particulars :—

The TRIPP
CYCLE Co., Ltd.,
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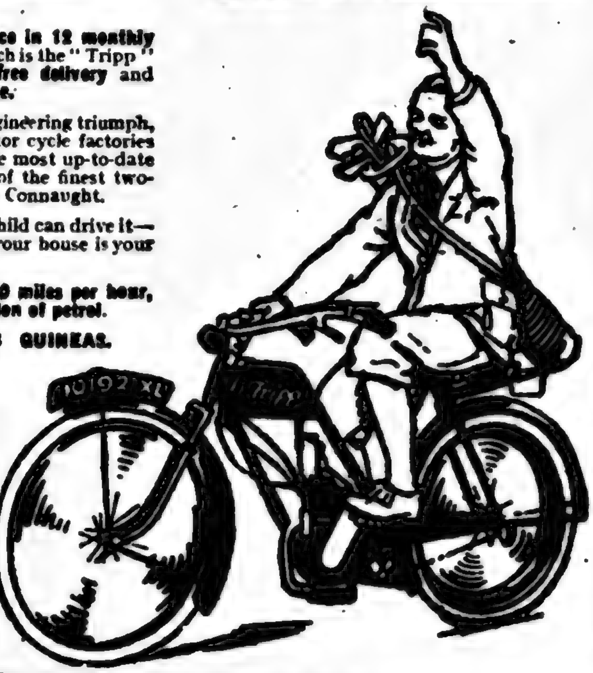

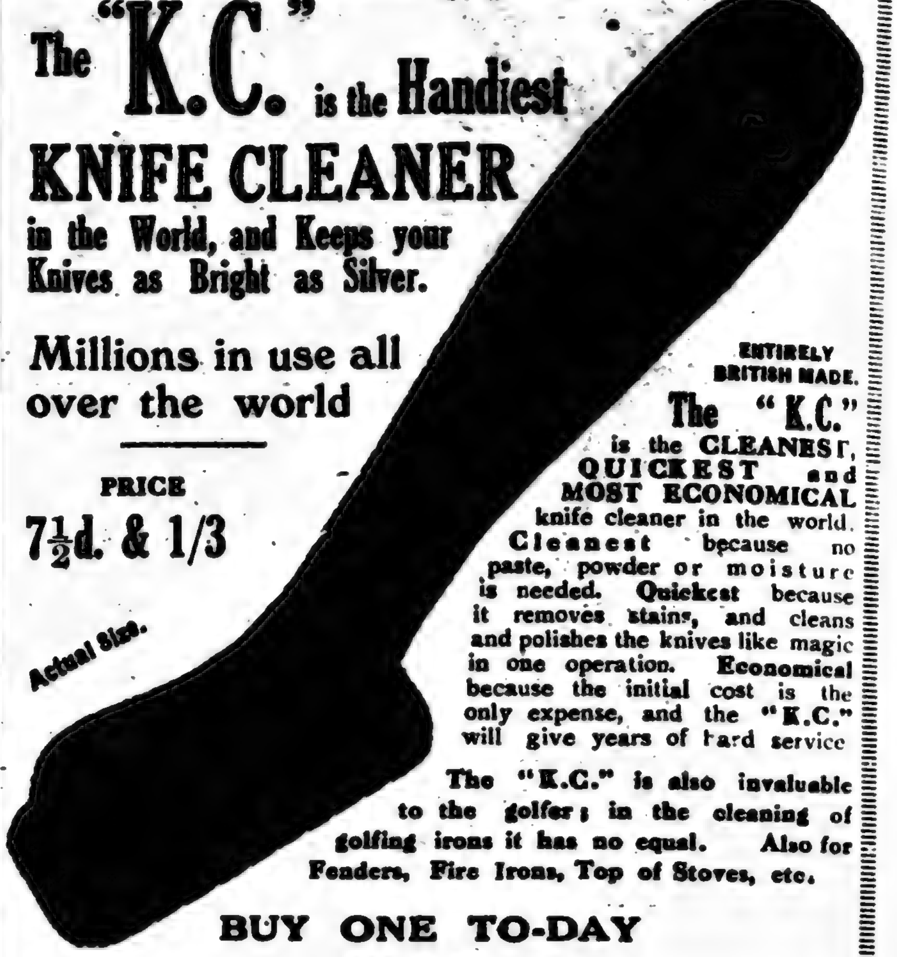
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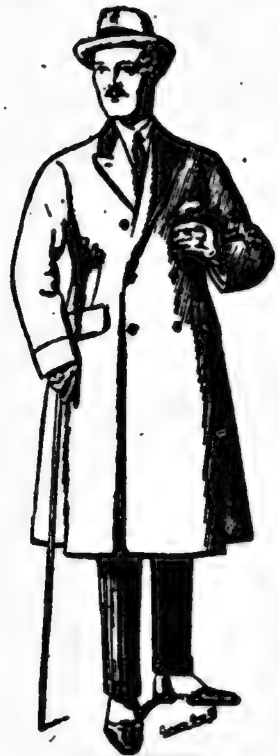

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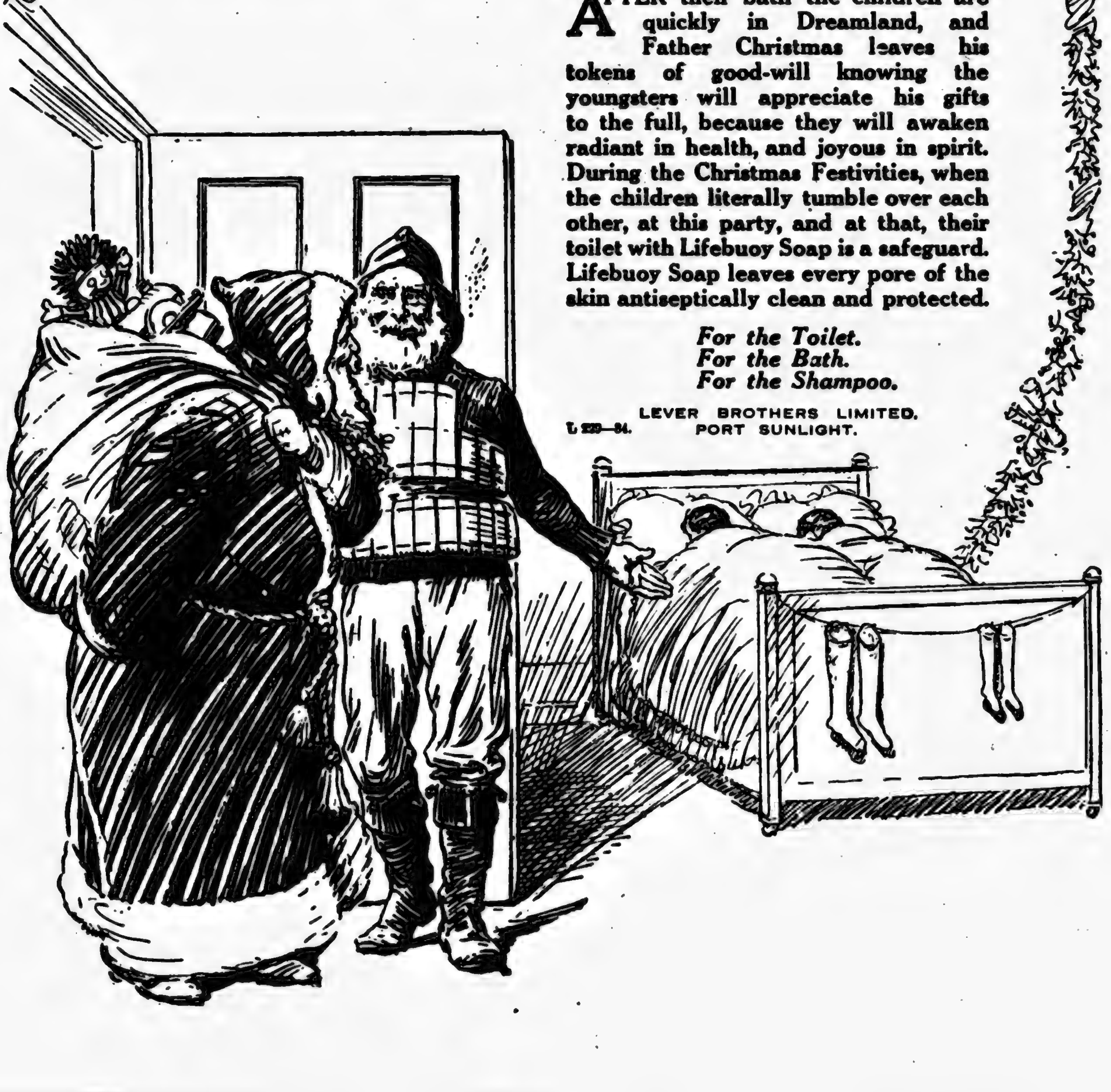

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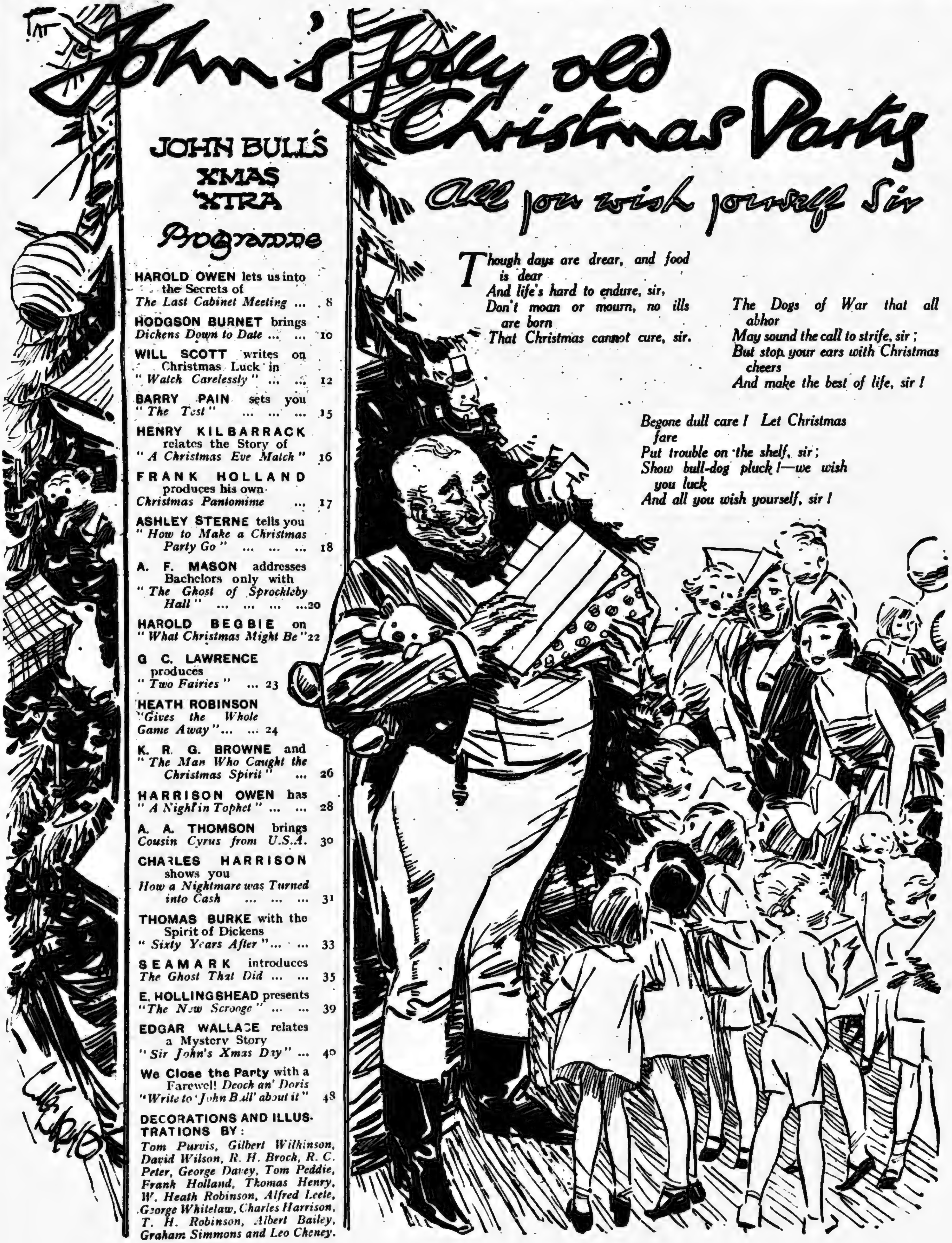
All you wish yourself Sir



JOHN BULL'S XMAS XTRA

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DECORATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY:
Tom Purvis, Gilbert Wilkinson, David Wilson, R. H. Brock, R. C. Peter, George Davey, Tom Peddie, Frank Holland, Thomas Henry, W. Heath Robinson, Alfred Leete, George Whitelaw, Charles Harrison, T. H. Robinson, Albert Bailey, Graham Simmons and Leo Cheney.

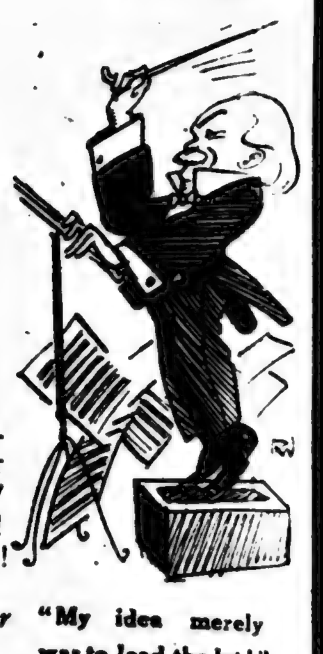
Though days are drear, and food is dear
And life's hard to endure, sir,
Don't moan or mourn, no ills are born
That Christmas cannot cure, sir.

The Dogs of War that all abhor
May sound the call to strife, sir;
But stop your ears with Christmas cheers
And make the best of life, sir!

Begone dull care! Let Christmas fare
Put trouble on the shelf, sir;
Show bull-dog pluck!—we wish you luck
And all you wish yourself, sir!

Harold Owen lets us into the Secrets of—

THE LAST CABINET MEETING



"My idea merely was to lead the lot!"

ONLY by his enterprise in installing a Detectophone in the Cabinet Room at 10, Downing Street, and connecting it with an ingenious, elaborate and ruinously expensive Wireless-Telephony system hitherto undiscovered, is JOHN BULL *able to render this account, more or less accurate, of the fateful Meeting here chronicled.*

SCENE: *The Cabinet Room at 10, Downing Street. The GEE WIZARD is discovered pacing impatiently up and down, and waiting for his last Cabinet to assemble. At that moment, though he does not know it, they are turning the corner of the street, singing a joyless Chorus, and the GEE WIZARD raises his head to listen.*

CHORUS (*off*):

With heavy tread and wearied feet
We shuffle once more to Downing Street;
We don't know why, but we know we are
In-fern-al-ly un-pop-u-lar! —
We're in the soup and when we poll
We know we shall all be on the dole!

THE GEE WIZARD: Those unemployed again! The third dem-demonstration this morning! (*Rings several bells at once. Enter two dozen and a half of his Secretariat.*) Tell those fellows unofficially to go and sing in the next street! And tell them officially that the Cabinet is about to assemble to consider their case!

THE SECRETARIAT: Please, sir, they *are* the Cabinet!

Enter the CABINET.

G. WIZ: Good Lord — I mean, Good morning—everybody. Why this sudden harmony?

WINNIE: Well, it's the only harmony we've ever had, so don't spoil it at the last moment.

EFFIE SMITH: You see, it was our little swan-song. And curiously enough, the most popular thing we've ever done!

WINNIE: Yes, great crowds in Whitehall, and I must say they treated us with the respect that is always due to a funeral procession. The spectacle of a united Cabinet walking two by two and with their voices uplifted even in downhearted song appealed to the populace as a very original and democratic thing to do.

EFFIE: Even the reporters cheered.

G. WIZ: I see. Well, you made a big noise. And there's only room for one BIG NOISE in *this* neighbourhood—and I'm it! However, sit down. (*Brightly.*) Well, chers confrères (as we say at the Conferences), I have been thinking . . .

THE CABINET: (*incredulously*) No!

G. WIZ: Yes—hard. And I have slowly, painfully, and reluctantly come to the conclusion that people are getting—I don't want to use exaggerated language—well, shall I say just a little bit critical of us . . . Oh, yes, indeed, and I wish to goodness I knew whatever for. But there certainly *are* signs that there's something wrong somewhere with some of you, and that we should not scoop the pool quite as easily as we did last time. So the question is, What about it? My original idea, as you know, was to work the "Socialist Menace" stunt.

EFFIE: Pardon me, *not* an original idea! You did that last time, only you said it was Bolshevism then.

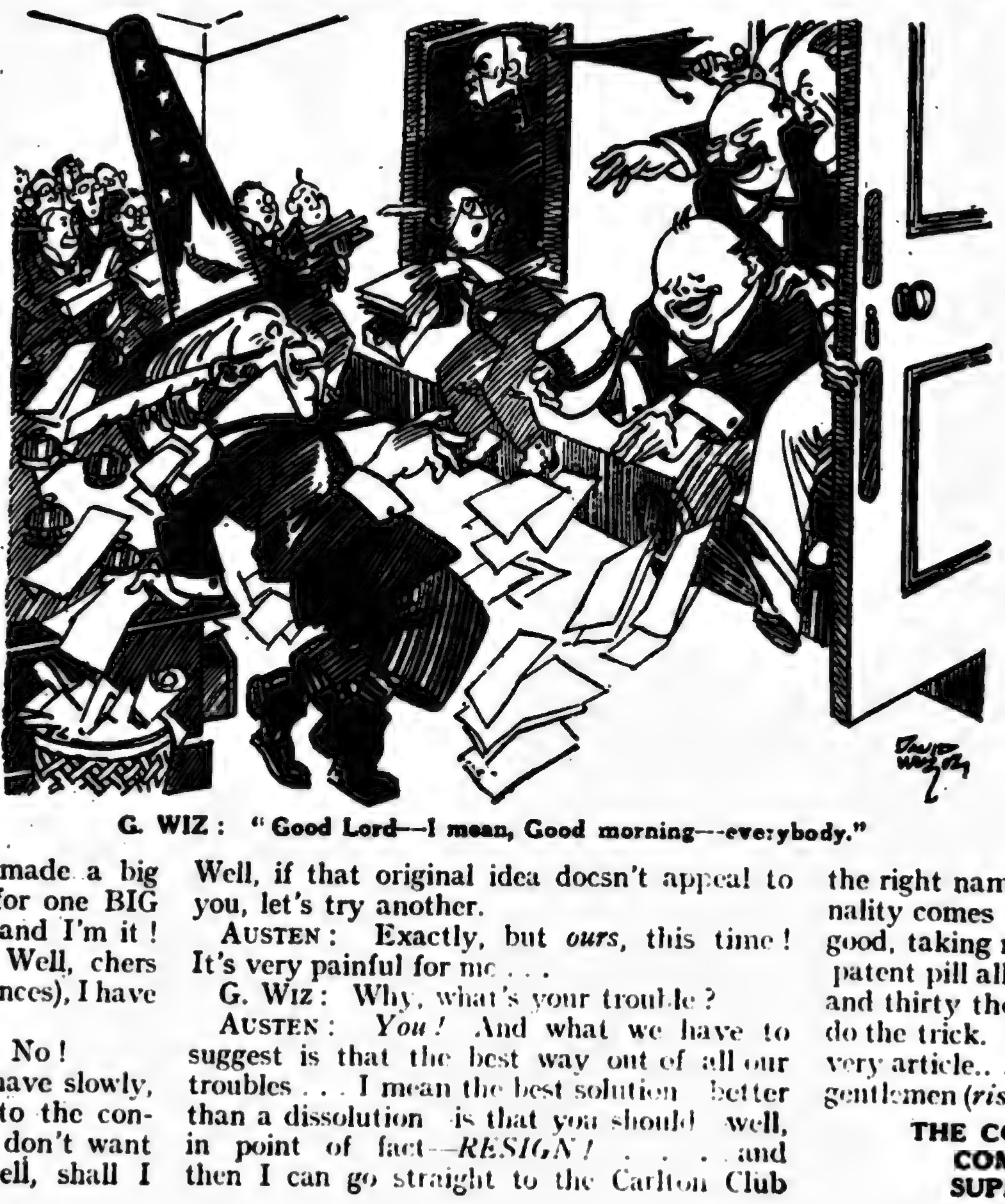
G. WIZ: Exactly. We can't do that twice—hence the brilliant notion of the change to the anti-Socialist racket.

WINNIE: But, my hat and hang it all! after denouncing the British working men in 1918 for being Bolshevists, blow me if you didn't start right away making friends with the Bolshies!

G. WIZ: Oh, people don't notice little things like that!

WINNIE: Don't they! Why, I noticed it myself!

G. WIZ: Yes, but you are almost dangerously intelligent for a Cabinet Minister . . .



G. WIZ: "Good Lord—I mean, Good morning—everybody."

Well, if that original idea doesn't appeal to you, let's try another.

AUSTEN: Exactly, but *ours*, this time! It's very painful for me . . .

G. WIZ: Why, what's your trouble?

AUSTEN: *You!* And what we have to suggest is that the best way out of all our troubles . . . I mean the best solution better than a dissolution is that you should well, in point of fact—*RESIGN!* . . . and then I can go straight to the Carlton Club and get a vote of confidence, and see you after dark. But, *RESIGN!*

WINNIE: Now, boys! Cue for special number! Altogether!

THE CABINET (*bar one, as before*):

Yes, there's the solution, and not dissolution,
From which we should never come back!
But if *you* took your hook, just to finish your book,
Our troubles would go in a crack!
You know it's the Wizard that sticks in its gizzard,
Though the country can swallow a lot,
But what makes its gorge rise? The tricks that Lloyd George tries!
So why not resign on the spot?
Oh, 'twould be such a jolly day
Like an extra Bank Holiday
If you'd only resign on the spot!

G. WIZ: Your voices are improving. I must take you down to the next Eisteddfod. Meanwhile, I don't see the particular item you mention down on our Agenda, so I will pass on to my next original idea. What do all you dear confrères, as I used to call them in France, say to this?—a NEW PARTY? . . . Ah! speechless with admiration, of course!

(*He waits for them to recover.*)

Takes your breath away, eh? Great idea! Just work up the stunt that the old shibboleths cut no ice and deliver no goods—you know the sort of thing—and that what the country *really* wants is The Real Thing—a party so friendly to everybody that there wouldn't be any opposition to it whatever!

EFFIE (*who is always the first to recover his composure*): But the bottom fell out of *that* idea a year ago!

G. WIZ: Ah, but only because we couldn't quite find the right name for it. That's where my originality comes in again. All we want is a jolly good, taking name—people tell me that for a patent pill all you want is just the right name and thirty thousand Brads. to boom it, and you do the trick. Same thing here, and I've got the very article.. . . Are you all ready? . . Then gentlemen (*rising*), we will go forth to battle as

THE CONSERVALIBERALABOUR COMMUNIONISTSCALISTIC SUPER-NATIONAL PARTY!

Effie: I don't think I quite caught that last remark!

Lord Goff Ball-Fore: Oh, please! . . I couldn't bear it twice.

Winnie: As an interminable terminological inexactitude . . .

G. Wiz: Well, what's the matter with it, all of you?

All of Them: All of it!

G. Wiz: Anyhow, you see the idea . . . a little bit of everything.

Winnie: But you have missed out the Diehards, the brothers Cecil, Nancy Astor, and several other parties.

G. Wiz: Oh, I didn't want to make it too long—just something "snappy" that would fill the bill and hit people in the eye. Anyhow, nothing doing?—because we must get on.

The Cabinet:

With condemnation firm and hearty,
We emphatically dam your hybrid party.
We won't try to pronounce it
But will merely denounce it—
Your jaw-breaking, head-aching,
Stunt-making, name-faking,
Three-shies-a-penny, a-few-yards-too-many,
Great-Snakes-and-Gee-Wizard old Party!

G. Wiz: Hm! I have never seen such unanimity among you before. And these sudden bursts of melody are somewhat disconcerting. But you don't see the awkwardness of my personal position. Here, look you, everybody is saying, "Which party is he going to lead?" Well, that is absurd, when I don't even know myself until I actually start telling the tale at the Election! But, at any rate, that question implies that there is nothing in my adaptable career and principles which prevents my leading any blessed one of them. So, with such generous public confidence in my versatility, my idea merely was *to lead the lot!*

(*Coughs and murmurs from the Cabinet.*)

Ah, I see what you mean! Quite right! But I need hardly say that I had already thought of that. You are thinking that by the time we had admitted a little fresh blood into our body—to accommodate the other elements in our little New Party—some of you might be frozen out and handed lemons. Ah, no! We should all retain our present places, and I should merely create a few fresh Ministries for the newcomers. Has it ever struck you that there are at present no Ministries for Charabancs, Daylight Saving, Allotments, Psycho-Analysis and the Drug Traffic, Palaces de Danse, Summer Sales, Broadcasting, and many other national and democratic activities that are at present entirely unrepresented by Ministerial Departments and are not on the Estimates?

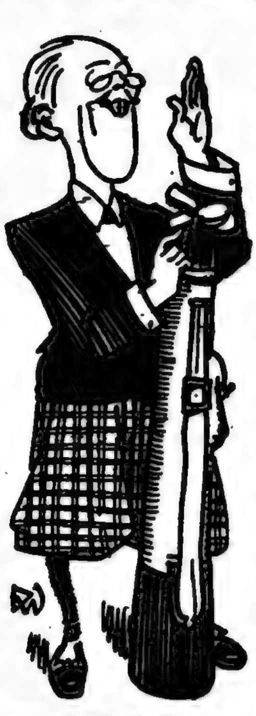
Horne: Stop yer tickling, Jock! As Chancellor of the Exchequer, I should have to be a verr-itable Horn of Plenty to find the bawbees for a' that!

The Cabinet laughs uproariously, and the Chancellor looks greatly offended—until it is carefully explained to him that he made a joke. He is so overcome by the shock of it that he retires (not from his office, but only into the corridor) to recover himself.

G. Wiz: I must say that none of you are very helpful this morning. The fact is that we could be in for another five years' stretch if we could only hit on something really daring—something quite out of the ordinary.

Austen: Well, what *haven't* we promised? If you can only think of that, *there we are!*

G. Wiz: My dear Austen, since the day your dear father, inspired by the late lamented Jesse Collings, promised those three acres and a cow, the whole stock of possible political promises has been absolutely exhausted. Ah, my trustful friends, *we* know what is the real pathos of the poor politician's position, for we are in the secret. It is that governments can do nothing to make men happy and prosperous—except by leaving them as much as possible alone—and the most they can do is to do nothing to prevent it. Here we go on, all of us trying to outbid the others, and yet we all know what we know (so long as it goes no further), that the whole tragedy of the politician is to be always promising miracles to get into office . . . and then having to explain why it can't be done. That is his tragedy—excuse my emotion—(and of course we mustn't give the show away) . . and that's where the fun comes in, too!



Lord Golf Ball-Fore: "Oh! Please . . I could'nt bear it twice."

The Cabinet:—

Ay, there's the rub!
Though we all stump the tub
And promise Reform,
We must play to the gallery,
Sure of nothing but salary,
For though we may promise, we can never perform!

G. Wiz (*admiringly*): Can't you, though! Ah, another idea! The greatest whatever! You say you can't *perform*? Away with such pessimism! I see daylight breaking in the clouds over the mountain peaks . . .

Effie: No, not on *us*, David—it isn't fair!

G. Wiz: Anyhow, I've got it! See, look you, the country is fed up with politics—even ours! It wants amusements, diversions, relaxations. And *we* want a New Party. Well, your unsuspected talents at last show me the way! Shove in the word "Concert" before the word "Party" in the chemical formula I gave you, and there we are! And then, look you, the oftener we change our programme *then*, the more they'll like it! Can any of you go one better than that?

Winnie: Yes, as Christmas is coming . . .

G. Wiz (*quickly*): Say no more—I was just going to say the same thing myself. As Christmas is coming, we will go into Panto—tour the country first, and then twice nightly at Westminster—all Cabinet Ministers to be "stars" and the Under Secretaries kept in the Chorus—and the Great Heart of Democracy will just simply leap out at us!

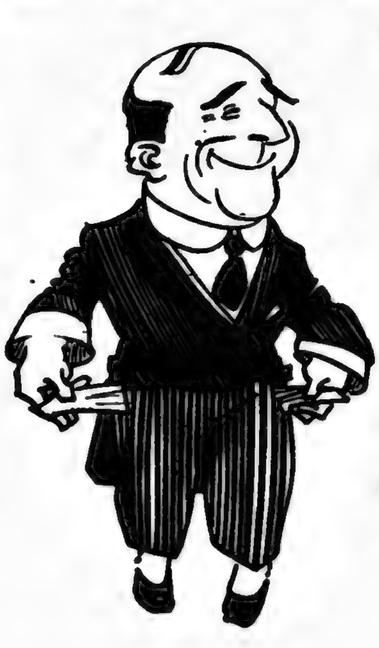
The Cabinet: Agreed, agreed!

G. Wiz:—

And now, as we are booked for Pantomime,
We will, to get our hand in, stick to rhyme.
What ho! my trusty Sec-re-tar-i-at!
Look slippy, pull your socks up, and all that!
Get busy with the paragraph and puff,
And ladle out your best Press-agent guff!
Get on to "Trunks," with managers discuss
What dates and sharing terms they'll give to us;
Tell them we'll lick creation with our show,
And boom it like a Charley Cochran! Go!

Exit the Entire Secretariat.

And now to work! For we must first decide
Which pantomime to do at Christmastide.
Thank goodness that, unless my mem'ry fails.
All pantomimes are based on fairy tales.
So we shall play no unfamiliar parts
A-telling of the tale to simple hearts!
"Bluebeard" we'll ban. That "beaver's" story
Is too polygamous, and far too gory.
But what price "Sindbad"? . . . No, for I can see
You'd want *me* to play "The Old Man of the Sea"!
And then "Cind'rella"? Democratic plot—
Pride humbled—virtue scores—and all that rot—
But what attracts me most, if you won't wince,
Is what a Charming chap I'd make the Prince!
And old Aladdin, with his wondrous lamp,
Is quite a fellow of my wizard stamp.
The magic that I've promised all the time
Might really happen—done in pantomime!
"Old Mother Goose"? Ah, no, for oft I've heard,
All "pros" avoid to ask or risk "the bird."
What we must find's a panto that will stand a
Good thick slab of useful propaganda!—
Whilst keeping people's minds off all those duds
That still remain our undelivered "goods,"
And giving them, instead of platform chatter,
Song, dance and joke, and entertaining patter.
(The modern instance of the cynic's "Rats!
You go the wrong way with your Democrats—
They want no pampering legislative diet,
But merely circuses, to keep 'em quiet.")
So what is it to be? There's dear old "Crusoe"
(Man Friday needs a very simple trousseau),
"Dick Whittington," "The Beanstalk," "Mother Hubbard"—
Best keep off *that*, because of *our* bare cupboard!
Or what a change from our official duties
To draw full houses as the "Sleeping "Beauties"!
(For we are "beauties" surely—so they mock us—
And as for sleeping soundly, what can shock us?)
But, after all, the panto to decide on
Must mark the virtues which ourselves we pride on!
What are we, then, but Simple, Trustful, Good?—
So, Gentlemen, let's go as Babes in the Wood;



(*Continued on page* 10.)

Horne: ". . . to find the bawbees for a' that!"

(*Continued from page 9*)

THE CABINET:

Agreed! Agreed! Agreed!
Without another canto!
Oh, beautiful days of babyhood,
Beautiful babes in a baby wood!
Ever so sweet and oh, so good!
When we go into Panto!

Enter all of the SECRETARIAT wildly.

THE SECRETARIAT:

Oh, Mighty Chief! Behold the grief
Of your loyal Sec-re-tar-i-at!
For the managers theatrical, Unsentimental, practical—
Have given their answer pat!
It seems you have contrived To put their many backs up
By keeping—"Peace" arrived—That Entertainment Tax up!
So their decision states
(However much it grieves),
"Tell him and his mates
We will only book 'dates'
If they come as 'THE FORTY THIEVES.'"

G. WIZ:

How say you, varlets? Odds bodikins! it *is* hard
That such small fry should over-reach The Wizard! (*He ponders.*)
I've got it! I'll resign! (Yes, that's the tack—
Always resign . . . when you expect the sack!)
My noble friends, my noble mind's made up,
But you shall share with me the bitter cup!
We'll *all* resign! and, from the wilderness,
Watch others try to clear up all our mess!
And here's the joke: *We know it can't be done!*
And that's just where we shall enjoy the fun.
Instead of *facing* hoots and yells and bawls
We'll start them going, sitting in the stalls,
(I'll find the ticket of my Limehouse suit)
And guy *their* show, with lusty boo and hoot!—
Old Harry play with Bonar Law and order,
And carry things to well beyond the border,
And let them see the Wizard's latest stunt:
To quit the stage, but spoil the show "in front"!
We may, of course, get *thrown* out—but it's certain
If boos can do it, *I*'ll bring down the Curtain!
Of course, by "boos" I don't—er—mean what *you* think,
Though, anyhow, to one last toast we'll drink:
"Our Noble Selves—first, last, and all the time!"
And, after all, we've *had* our Pantomime—
Four jolly years of fooling and of clowning
In this old street, named after Mr. Downing.
The wonder is (let's own up, now we chuck it)
That poor JOHN BULL so long and bravely stuck it!

CURTAIN.

* * *

HER CHRISTMAS FROCK

A yard of silk, a yard of lace,
A wisp of tulle to give it grace,
A flower placed where flowers should go,
The skirt knee high, the back waist low,
One shoulder strap, no sign of sleeve,
If she should sneeze—Good morning, Eve!

Hodgson Burnet brings DICKENS DOWN to DATE

LONDONERS are proverbially unobservant and the fact that it was Christmas week when everybody's attention was concentrated on the shop windows, may account for their failure to take any particular notice of the enormous char-a-banc and its queer looking passengers which was drawn up in front of the Golden Cross Hotel.

Occupying the driver's seat was a shabby-genteel individual, in whose jaunty impudence and perfect self-possession lovers of Dickens would have immediately recognised an old friend.

"One more to come," said the driver, consulting a list, "Stout old party—blue dress coat—gilt button with P.C. on it—anybody seen him?—can't wait—ah! here he is!—hurry up there—all aboard the lugger!—*Up* she comes!—pip! pip!—off we go!"

And just in time Mr. Pickwick, with his note-book ready in his hand for the reception of anything which he considered worth chronicling, was unceremoniously hauled up and dumped down beside Mr. Jingle just as that gentleman let in the clutch.

"Near thing that," said Mr. Jingle. "Dangerous too—very—other day—old gent—just your build—carrying trouser press—missed bus—fell—run over by steam-roller—trouser press not required—steam-roller did it for him—shocking waste of money, shocking. Here we are—Whitehall—Government buildings—full of Limpets—fine fellows—eh?"

"Limpets!" said Mr. Pickwick, opening his note-book. "Ah! I suppose you are referring to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries?"

"Not at all," said Mr. Jingle. "Limpets there too—yes, but limpets everywhere—Treasury limpets—Home Office limpets—Education limpets—War Office limpets—splendid fellows for sticking—stick to salaries—stick to antiquated hours—stick to bonuses—great stickers, eh?"

Mr. Pickwick made an entry in his note-book with a view of communicating to the club a paper on the singular capacity displayed by the denizens of Whitehall in sticking to their posts in trying circumstances. The entry was scarcely completed when the char-a-banc gave a jolt, causing a stout lady on Mr. Pickwick's left to collide violently with that gentleman.

"Drat you!" said Mrs. Gamp (for such it was) indicating the offending 'bus with her umbrella. "Drat you for a noisy, spluttering monster with your confugion numbers as nobody knows whether you're a-going or a-coming back, and your sudding stops and sudding starts as has done more to preticipate certing delicate events at times when least expected and not wanted, as Mrs. Harris was only a-telling me of the other day which it happened to her own cousing in a No. 9 to 'Ammersmith who is married to an optigian's assistant in 'Olborn, who named the blessed infant after the conductor of the very 'bus as was the cause, to shew there was no ill feeling. Ugh! You brute!" And having thus given vent to her feelings Mrs. Gamp took a liberal pull from the bottle which she had taken out of her hand-bag and relapsed into a moody silence.

"My dear Copperfield," said a gentleman in the back seat turning to his neighbour, "the wholly uncalled for intimacies thrust upon us by the female who has just subsided have—if you will allow me to borrow from the picturesque vocabulary of one of our most popular pastimes a phrase which in the circumstances I venture to submit is singularly felicitous—in short, have completely 'put me off my drive.' To a man who has attached himself to this somewhat heterogeneous excursion for the sole purpose of becoming better acquainted with the amazing developments of this modern Babylon, the outbreak to which I refer is trying, I assure you. But here we are at the Abbey, which you will observe some vandals have attempted to whitewash. It is peculiarly interesting to me, my dear Copperfield, on account of the fact that I myself am at present—ah—in short interested in whitewash. It is not a lucrative profession, and has in fact landed me in some temporary embarrassments of a pecuniary nature which ———."

"You were *not* looking at the Abbey! You know you were not!" screamed a lady passenger, suddenly pulling violently at the whiskers of a gentleman in front of her, "I *saw* you winking at that—that person in the silk stockings!"

"Silk stockings?" said the gentleman addressed, "Oh, dem! No, upon my soul, not silk stockings, demmit! Haven't I been looking at the demnition buildings all the time like a dem'd Yankee rubber-neck? And now its sweetest popsy-wopsy accuses it of winking at a dem'd pair of silk stockings! Oh what a dem'd jealous fascinating savage lamb it is! Oh, demmit!"

"Sam," said Pickwick sternly to a young man who sat immediately behind him.

"Sir?" replied Sam removing a straw from his mouth.

"I must request you not to wink at the passers by," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Which, sir?" inquired Sam innocently, "the gen'lm'n vith the face trimmings who aperiently goes by the universal name of 'Beaver,' or the interesting young 'ooman whose dress begins just about vere it leaves off? I was only looking with one eye, sir, as the servant girl said when she was caught peeping through the keyhole."

"That will do, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick severely. "Very good, sir," said Sam, "no offence intended, as the Irish rebel said when he put a bullet through the policeman."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gamp looking sourly at a flapper who passed at the moment, "thankful I am that pore Gamp is not here to-day to see them bragian hussies a displaying of their legs for all to see, him being that modest as wouldn't have dared to parse them corset shops what has sich owdacious bustses in the winder, which in my young days the custom was to hide the female form divine as the saying goes and not expoge it, though how that young woman can think them legs of hers is divine which they're more like piano legs than human is parst my comprehenshun."

"On your left, ladies and gentlemen," said the driver, standing up and indicating the Houses of Parliament, "is The Westminster Theatre of Varieties—wonderful show—two houses nightly—varied programme, very—best paid company in Europe—stars £5,000 per annum—supers £8 per week—fact—honour—free admission—result Income Tax 5s. in the pound—can't have it both ways—what?"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Pickwick, "this is very interesting!" and he immediately made an entry in his note-book on the Astounding Development in Recent Years of State-aided Music Halls.

"Ah! Johnson!" said a voice from the middle of the vehicle. "*What* a place that would have been for the phenomenon's benefit night! We should have taken money, Johnson, in a place like that! Especially with you throwing comic balloons among the audience from the pony's back, with the infant phenomenon standing on your head and firing real silk Union Jacks from a pistol! We'd have knocked 'em, eh Johnson?"

"I am afraid, Mr. Crummles," said Nicholas smiling in spite of himself, "that, as they say in there, the answer is in the negative."

"But, my dear Miss Summerson," said a silky voice apparently in answer to a protest from his companion, "why worry? Here is our friend the driver full of exquisite imagination converting this drab example of debased Gothic architecture into a veritable fairy palace for our delight. Now that is beautiful, that is inspiring, that is poetry! Some gross materialistic fellow may say to me, 'Why should he tell all these people that the House of Commons is a Theatre of Varieties when it isn't?' I reply, 'My dear materialistic friend, how do *I* know that it isn't?

IN fact it very likely *is*. In any case the description is very agreeable to me, and I see no reason why my friend should not express himself with such imagination as is in him. Besides, my dear Miss Summerson, it is not my business to enlighten my fellow passengers. I have not paid, for I have no money and would not know what to do with it if I had. But here I am and I ask you to allow Harold Skimpole, like a good soul, to remain the confiding child of nature that he is and to let him drink in such poetry as an excursion of this nature has to offer."

"And, my dear young lady," came an urgent whisper from a neighbouring seat, "if you have any influence in a certain quarter and there *should* be a vacancy in the Home Office, *don't* forget that Codlin's the man, *not* Shortt!"

The char-a-banc had now turned along the Embankment and Mr. Jingle was assuring Mr. Pickwick that the imposing building they were passing "supplied policemen by the yard—splendid fellows—strong as horses—stronger—saw one yesterday—busy street—lady crossing—brewer's dray—P.C. x 57 to the rescue—held up dray with one hand—left hand too—amazing—fact—honour bright"—when suddenly he nearly ran over an elderly man who was just stepping off the kerb accompanied by four small boys. There was a shout from the char-a-banc ———.

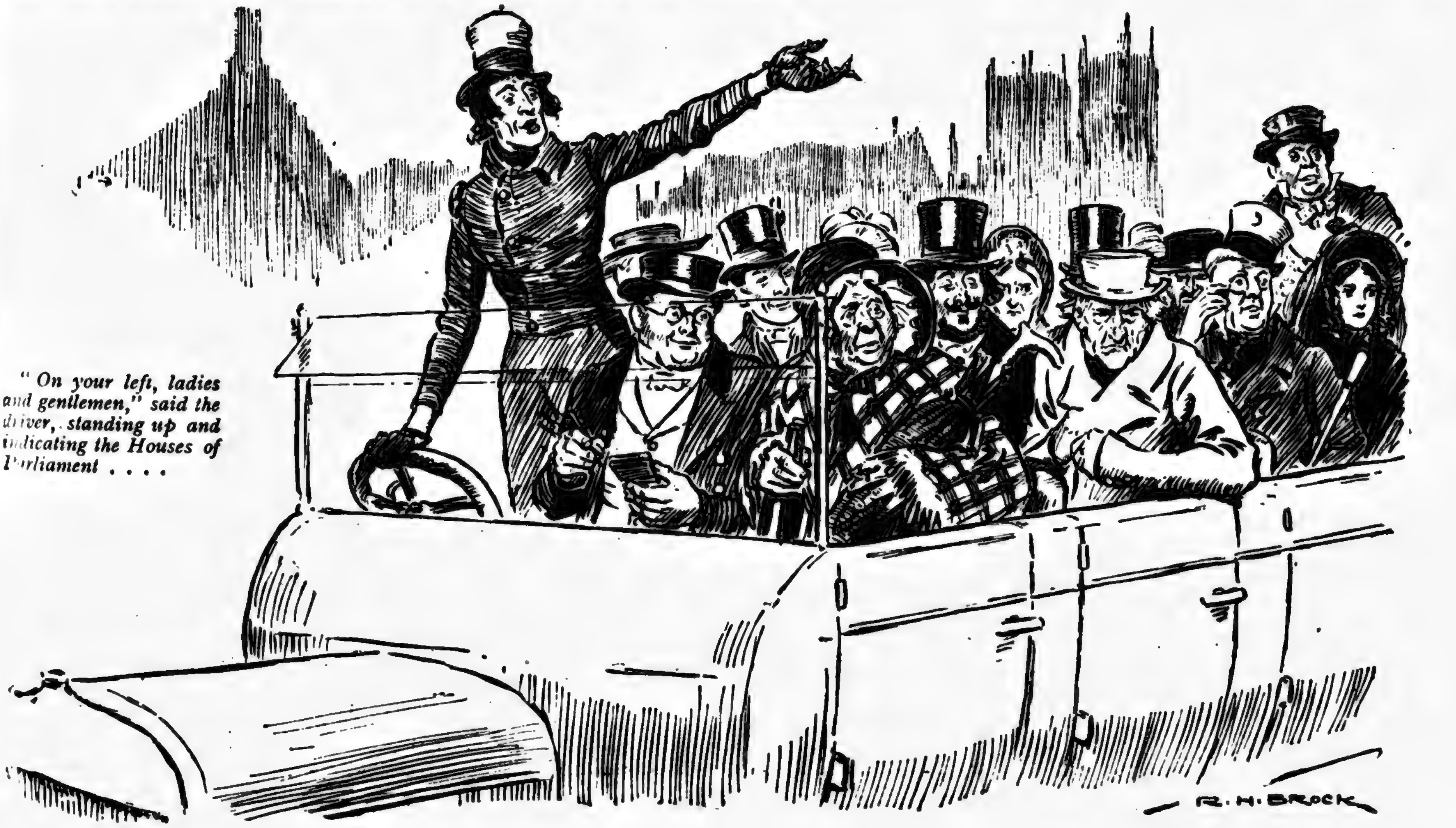
"Stop a minute, driver! Hi! you there, sir! Allow me! my card, sir! Them boys, sir, must be a great responsibility in a place like London. There is a gentleman here, sir, who will bear me out when I say that them boys would receive every attention and a liberal education at Dotheboys Hall in the delightful village of Dotheboys—where their ain't no traffic—near Greta Bridge, Yorkshire, where youth is boarded, clothed, washed ———."

"Well I be dom'd!" exclaimed a big-boned man in a strong Yorkshire accent. "If that doant beat all! Ho! ho! the schoolmeasther agin all Lunnon! Did ye ever see the loike o' thaat? We near as nowt roon ower a man and his childer, an' dang me! schoolmeasther gies him a prospectus! Gie us thee hond, mun, and a Happy Christmas to ee!"

"Christmas? Who talks of Christmas?" cried a wheezy voice. "Bah! Humbug! Stuff and nonsense! Every idiot who goes about wishing a fellow idiot a Happy Christmas should be stuffed with sausages and buried in a vast mince pie with a turkey as a headstone. He should be ———."

BUT what further fate old Scrooge had in store for the keepers of Christmas will never be known, for at that moment the char-a-banc was swallowed up in a dense fog and was never seen again

And what is still more curious, on enquiry being made at the Golden Cross Hotel *no one had any knowledge of such a vehicle ever having started!*



"On your left, ladies and gentlemen," said the driver, standing up and indicating the Houses of Parliament . . . .

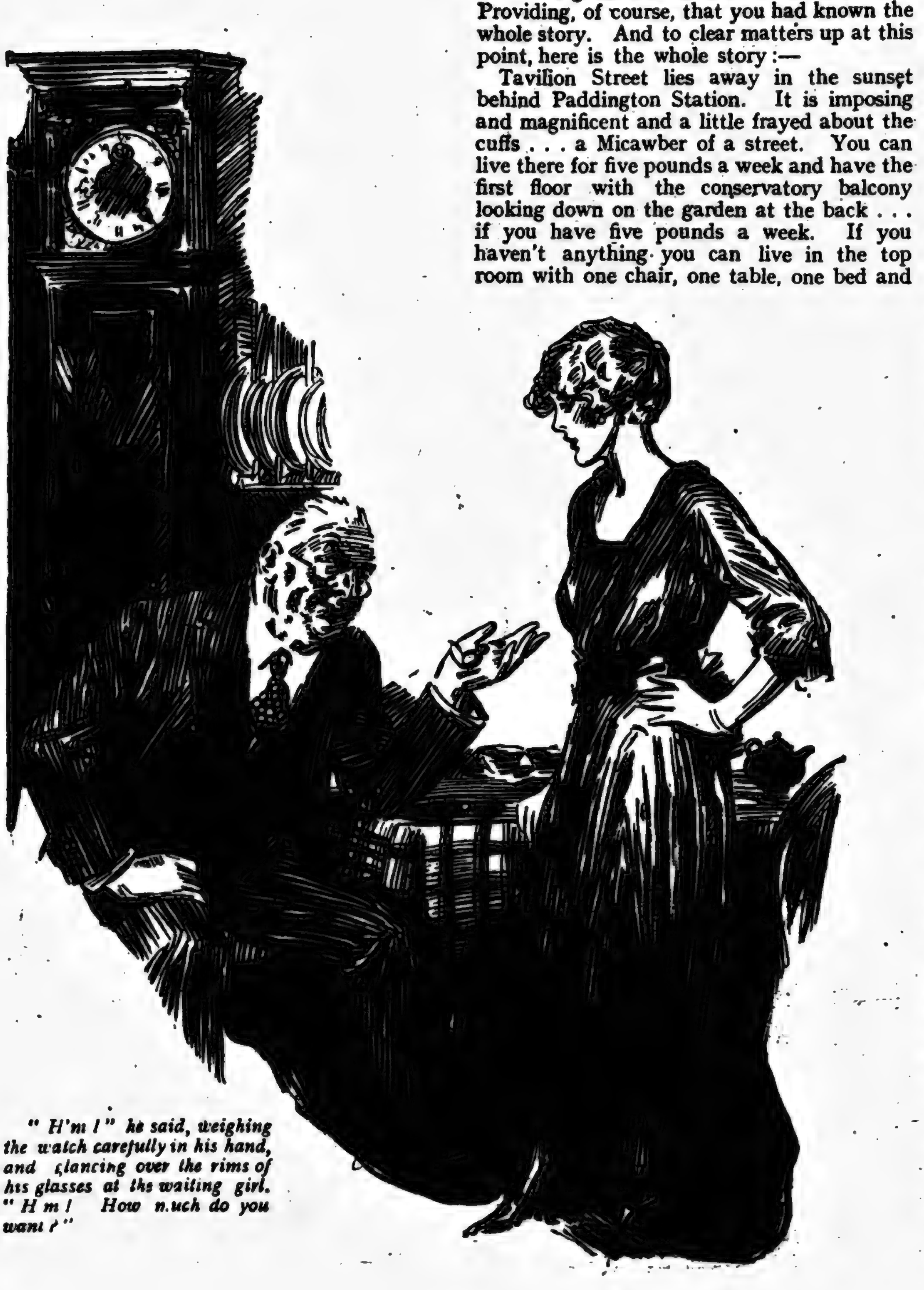
Will Scott on Christmas Luck

WATCH—CARELESSLY!

"Better be born Lucky than Rich—Honesty the only Policy—Love will find a way!"

ALL I want to know is this: When is a mistake not a mistake? And if you had been the editor of the *Evening Sunbeam* would you have "stopped" little Johnny Jones, the office boy, at a moment's notice, or would you have given him an increase of salary and a goose for his mother for Christmas? Providing, of course, that you had known the whole story. And to clear matters up at this point, here is the whole story:—

Tavilion Street lies away in the sunset behind Paddington Station. It is imposing and magnificent and a little frayed about the cuffs . . . a Micawber of a street. You can live there for five pounds a week and have the first floor with the conservatory balcony looking down on the garden at the back . . . if you have five pounds a week. If you haven't anything you can live in the top room with one chair, one table, one bed and no pictures on the wall . . . but not for long. Mrs. Wickins, the worthy landlady, will see Mr. Wickins, the worthy landlord, about it; and Mr. Wickins will see you about it and then out you go. This is at Number Ten, Tavilion Street.



"H'm!" he said, weighing the watch carefully in his hand, and glancing over the rims of his glasses at the waiting girl. "H m! How much do you want?"

Miss Joye Belle sat in the little top room at Number Ten and wept and bit her lip and wondered what was going to be done about it. There was no fire in the grate, no food in the cupboard, no money in the purse, and no spark of sympathy in the heart downstairs. And, just to rub it in a bit, it was the morning of Christmas Eve. Miss Joye Belle was an actress, now and again, and the thought of this made her weep once more. A hundred pantomimes were laughing about the country at this very moment and she wasn't in one of them.

She raised her head and listened to the hard footsteps of Mrs. Wickins ascending the stairs. Would she stop on the floor below, or would she come up the last flight? . . . She came up the last flight. This was to be the end, then. Out into the snow on Christmas Eve, friendless, penniless. Like "Doris Dalyrimple" in "The Unrelenting Father," that Joye herself toured in last year. Oh, all right, all right!

The door opened and the hard face of Mrs. Wickins peeped into the room.

"Post!" she said; and cast the things on to the table and then gave the door a slam and went away.

TIREDLY Joye crossed the room to the table and took up the envelopes and the little parcel. Parcel . . . who should send her a parcel at Christmas Eve here? A parcel? . . . The envelopes contained bills. She unfolded them without shock and placed them on a pile of elder brothers on the mantelshelf. Then she sat once more by the empty grate and opened the parcel.

"This is a go!" she cried, taking off the last wrapper and lifting a tiny pasteboard lid, and snowing a little storm of jeweller's wool about the bare carpet. "My!"

Out from the box she brought a watch—small, beautiful, luxurious and golden. Her eyes opened wide, and her mouth went small and round as she held it up and stared at it. Golden—real gold! Joye Belle with a gold watch for Christmas! Broke as they make 'em, but with a gold watch for Christmas!! It beat everything.

There was a letter with the little box, and now Joye took it up and read it. "With the Compliments of the Editor of the *Evening Sunbeam*," it went: "'Difrents' Competition. First Prize."

Joye sprang from her seat and executed a little dance on the shabby floor. The *Evening*

Sunbeam's "Difrents"! Why, she had even forgotten filling in the coupon and sending it. That was a fortnight ago; and she had not herself thought so highly of her "Difrents" at the time. Besides, she never won anything . . . And here the thing was done, and the first prize was hers, and Christmas was here, and . . .

Joye opened the door and tip-toed downstairs, her face alight with happiness and relief. Mr. Wickins presided over Number Ten's destinies in a cage of a room somewhere below the level of the ground. If you wanted him you could always find him there before twelve in the morning. He laid his pipe down on the table now as Joye entered.

"Well?" he said.

"Mr. Wickins," said Joye. "My rent . . . I haven't any money now, but I've won a gold watch in a newspaper competition, and I thought perhaps you could take it out of that, and give me some change—or I could pawn it, or——"

"Let me see," said Mr. Wickins.

She passed the watch across to him, and he put on his glasses and looked at it carefully. Mr. Wickins knew a good thing when he saw it; but he was shrewd enough not to smile too soon on this occasion.

"H'm!" he said, weighing the watch carefully in his hand, and glancing over the rims of his glasses at the waiting girl. "H'm! How much do you want?"

"Well—what do you think? I'm sure I don't know."

He took the pipe from the table and stuck it in his mouth. His thumb ran lovingly across the glass of the watch face.

"If we call your debt orf, up-to-date, an' I give you five quid in, eh? What d'you think to that?"

"Oh, Mr. Wickins! Really! Really that?"

"Oh, well, I'm a soft-hearted cove. An' it's Christmas . . ."

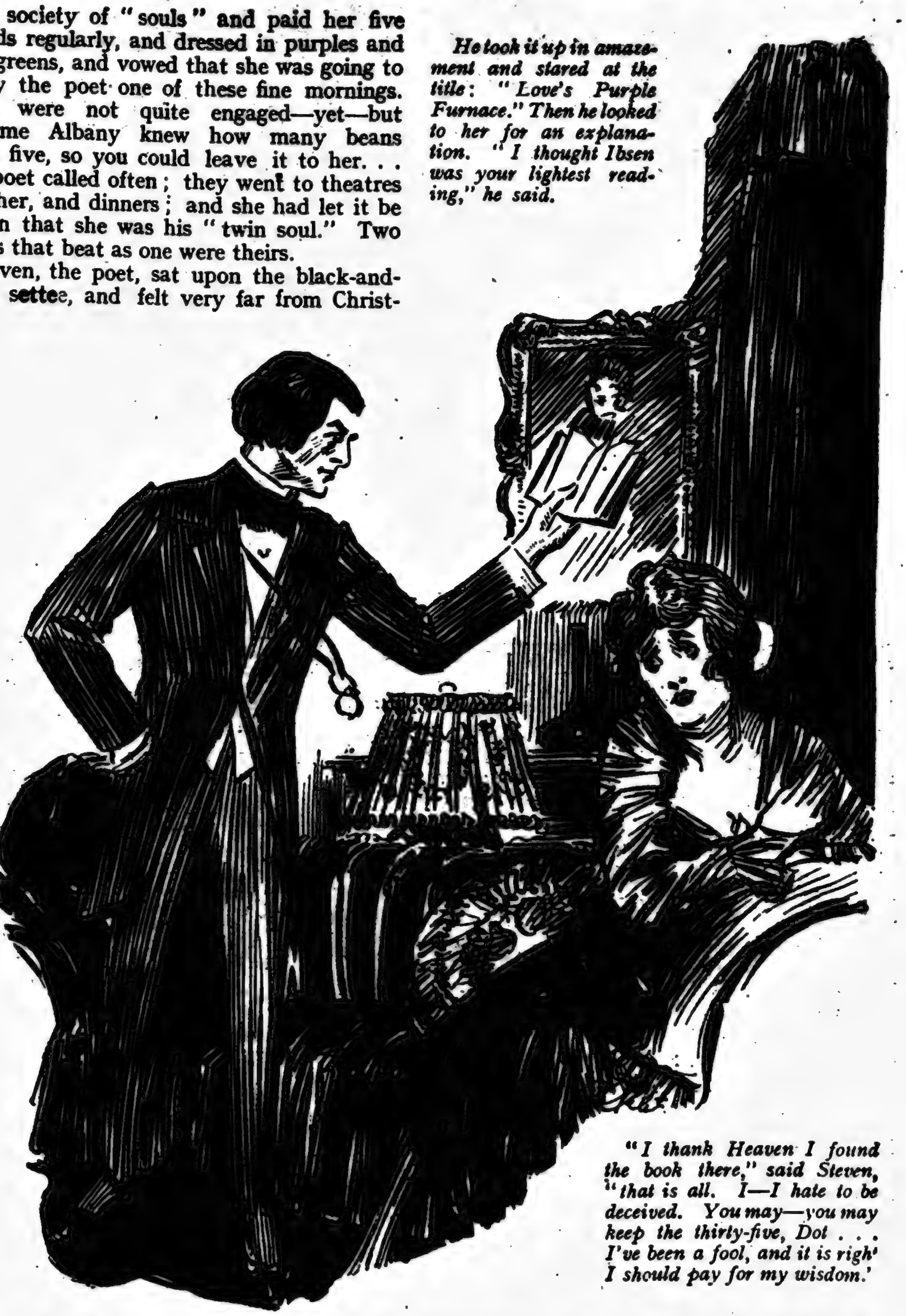
So he called off the debt and gave her five pounds, and patted himself on the back as soon as she was out of the room. Worth twenty quid if it was worth a bean, that watch was. He patted himself again, and slipped the watch into his pocket. Then he began to wonder what he'd do with it.

WHEN Joye left Mr. Wickins' room and hurried up the dark flight of steps to the hall, she suddenly found herself face to face with the dark young man who was supposed to be a poet, and who came so often to see Madame Albany; and when Joye found herself face to face with the dark young man who was supposed to be a poet, she blushed, because she was always finding herself face to face with the dark young man, and more than once she had found herself wishing that he did not come so often to see Madame Albany. He smiled when he saw her this Christmas Eve morning, but he did not speak. He had never spoken to her, nor she to him; so she hurried on upstairs, and he tapped at the door of the first-floor room that was Madame Albany's, and went in in response to a deep-voiced command.

"Hello Steve!" said Madame Albany.

"Hello Dot!" said the poet.

For five pounds a week she had the first floor with the conservatory balcony overlooking the garden at the back. Nobody knew very much about her. She belonged to some society of "souls" and paid her five pounds regularly, and dressed in purples and wild greens, and vowed that she was going to marry the poet one of these fine mornings. They were not quite engaged—yet—but Madame Albany knew how many beans made five, so you could leave it to her. . . The poet called often; they went to theatres together, and dinners; and she had let it be known that she was his "twin soul." Two minds that beat as one were theirs.



He took it up in amazement and stared at the title: "Love's Purple Furnace." Then he looked to her for an explanation. "I thought Ibsen was your lightest reading," he said.

"I thank Heaven I found the book there," said Steven, "that is all. I—I hate to be deceived. You may—you may keep the thirty-five, Dot . . . I've been a fool, and it is righ' I should pay for my wisdom.'

Steven, the poet, sat upon the black-and-white settee, and felt very far from Christmassy. He did not know quite how to begin. He was not sure that he ever would begin. He had made his bed and he must lie upon it. It was understood in their "set" that he and Dot would marry one day, and he had no excuse—how could he have—for suddenly dashing the house of cards to the ground. He saw the years stretching ahead—years of married existence; loveless, cold . . . But then had they not both vowed that they believed not in love—that intellect was all—that it was their minds and not their bodies that would stand one day before the altar? Steven brushed the strange complexity aside and tried to think of other and more cheerful things.

"Well," he said, leaving an opening to her—"and what now?"

"Steve," she said, after a moment's hesitation, sitting upon the arm of the settee, and looking down at him with narrowing eyes. "Steve, I'm up against it here with the rent and—other things. I want a tenner—just must have it. Now be a dear boy——"

Steven looked up sharply, then dropped his head and spread his hands.

"But—Dot . . . That's thirty-five in less than—I—I—you know what publishers are! I just can't get it myself. You should have it, but I just can't get it myself."

"You have friends."

"You mean—I must borrow from my friends for you? But, Dot . . . This place! You could go to less expensive rooms; you could live a less expensive life. Lots of the boys and girls of our set, I assure you, contrive on little enough . . . I mean to say——"

"I must have money, Steve. I must have money. Have I a mill girl's mind that you should lecture me thus? Would you have me live in a top room and dress in cotton blouses and read——"

She broke off. Steven, in his embarrassment, had plucked at a grey and gold cushion that lay by his side, and, turning it, had disclosed to view a new novel with a hectic and insistent cover. He took it up in amazement and stared at the title: "Love's Purple Furnace." Then he looked to her for an explanation.

"I thought Ibsen was your lightest reading?" he said. "What is this doing here?"

He opened it and pointed to a turned page.

"And you have got on fairly well with it too. You—like it!"

She snatched the book savagely from him and cast it on the table.

"And if I do?"

"I thank heaven I found the book there," said Steven; "that is all. I—I hate to be deceived. You may—you may keep the thirty-five, Dot. I see now why you professed to like Ibsen, and—and my stuff. All right. I've been a fool; and it is right I should pay for my wisdom. Good-bye, Dot. It is fortunate we have—found out in time."

She laughed a short hard laugh and tossed her head.

"'You mean we might have been married too soon. Don't fear! I'm not the marrying sort, Steve. Thanks for the money. I—I rather fancy I should have hung on to it in any case."

He strode out and closed the door softly behind him. In the hall he saw once more the little girl with the golden curls who was supposed to be an actress. He smiled at her as he always did, but this time he wished her good morning. She was dressed in a heavy grey coat, and had a little turban hat perched above her golden curls. He opened the door for her and they went down the steps of Number Ten together. And all the way along Tavilion Street . . .

When Mrs. Wickins tapped at the first-floor door Madame Albany was still sitting moodily in the corner of the black-and-white settee, staring with unseeing eyes at nothing in particular, and making vague plans for the morrow—or sooner. She called, "Come in," without any interest as to who came in, and did not look up when Mrs. Wickins entered.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Wickins—"I'm sorry. I did not know you were not ready——"

"That's all right, Mrs. Wickins," said Madame Albany, looking up at last, and greeting the elder woman with her best and coldest smile. "I was just going out. You can start whenever you like. I'll not be in your way."

EVERY year, on Christmas Eve, it was Mrs. Wickins' custom to "see to" the first floor personally, explaining that the servants were hard at it below; for the first floor was usually good for anything up to a couple of pounds in the way of a Christmas box, if carefully mothered for the day. And of course Mrs. Wickins herself had more use for a couple of pounds than her servants.

"Ah well, I don't like to be in the way, but if you're goin' out, madame . . . Look what Wickins has given me for Christmas. You could have knocked me down with a feather. Never gives me anything, Wickins don't. Did it 'cos it's Christmas, I suppose. Ain't it a beauty, miss?"

Madame Albany took the gold watch and looked it over carefully, opening the case, examining it in every detail. When she spoke she did not hand it back to its owner at once, but balanced it in her hand, and when she had got Mrs. Wickins' interest fixed on some other topic she laid it down absently on the table.

"Yes, you're a very lucky woman. I know a good watch when I see one, Mrs. Wickins; and I tell you you could raise thirty pounds on that whenever you want to. Fact! And that reminds me—I was going to buy you a watch for a Christmas present. Now it will have to be something else. You must tell me what you would like . . ."

WHILE Mrs. Wickins busied herself in the bathroom, Madame Albany swiftly and silently packed a trim travelling-case behind the folding-door of the bedroom. This she placed behind a screen by the sitting-room door, and when Mrs. Wickins came in again she was idly turning the pages of "Love's Purple Furnace."

"I shall not be late," she said. "Have tea for me by four. Oh, there's the rent . . . Leave it till I get back. I must go. There's a novel here you might like to read over the holidays . . ."

And as Mrs. Wickins went through into the bedroom she took up the gold watch from the table, and the travelling-case from behind the screen and went out.

When Joye got back that evening, and entered the hall, she found herself suddenly in Bedlam's understudy. Mrs. Wickins held the stage, with the other boarders crowding round, a sympathetic chorus.

"I'll Madame Albany her, if ever I puts eyes on her again," cried Mrs. Wickins. "Right under my very nose she took it—the loveliest watch you ever seen. A common thief, that's what she is—and her rent unpaid, too. I'll give her Madame Albany . . ."

And the story was retold once more, for the fortieth or fiftieth time.

Mrs. Wickins attended in person in the little top room that evening. Mrs. Wickins could never do too much for a boarder who "settled up like a sport."

"And I'll get the maid to slip up and put you a bit o' fire in, dearie. You can't be without fire, Christmas Eve. And there's a book for you, dearie——" laying it on the arm of the chair—"something for you to be reading these holidays. Nothing in my line, but you might like it . . . Anything I can do just give a shout down . . ."

Joye took up the copy of "Love's Purple Furnace" and glanced at it casually. Then she tossed it aside and opened her newspaper.

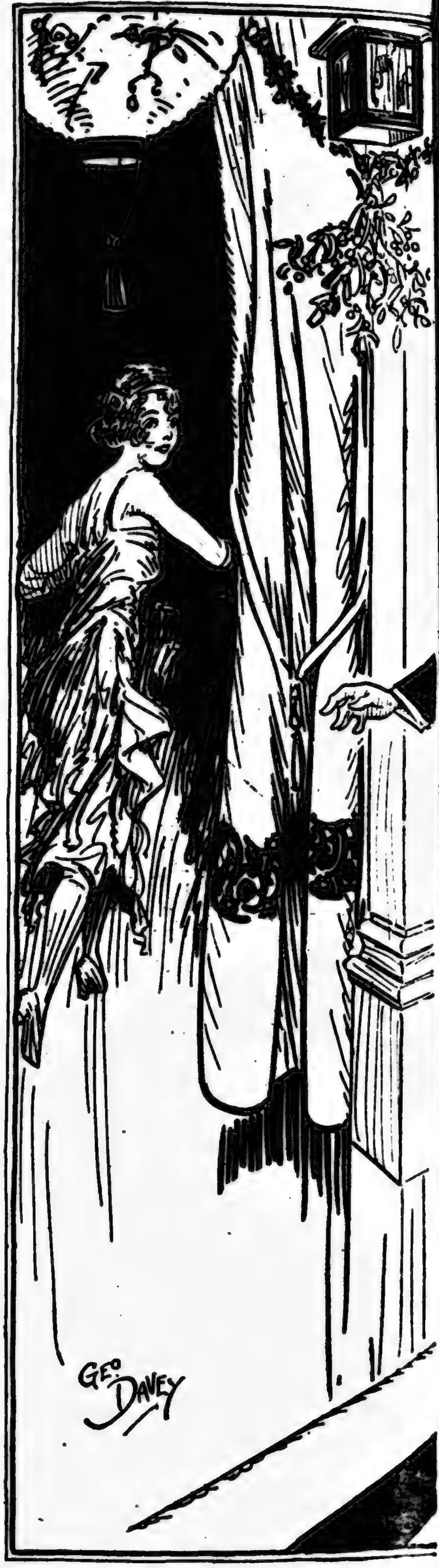
Suddenly she started and looked closer at that which she saw; drew the candle forward and read it a second and a third time:

"Difrents Competition. First Prize fifty-guinea watch won by Madame Albany, of 10, Tavilion Street, Bayswater . . . Second Prize . . . Third Prize . . . Twenty consolation prizes, copies of world-famous novel, 'Love's Purple Furnace,' to James Waters, 7, Crouch End Terrace, N.; Mrs. Daw, 'Ivydene,' Shepherd's Bush Avenue, W.; Miss Joye Belle, 10, Tavilion Street, Bayswater . . ."

As the paper dropped from Joye's surprised grasp, a little smile crept over her face, and she leaned back and closed her eyes and laughed a low, soft laugh.

"Well," she said, to herself, "what can I do now, anyway? One thing I'd like to do. The typist, or the office boy, or whoever sends out the prizes and got us mixed up because of the same address—I'd just like to wish her—or him—a Merry Christmas, and give her—or him—a real big Christmas kiss."

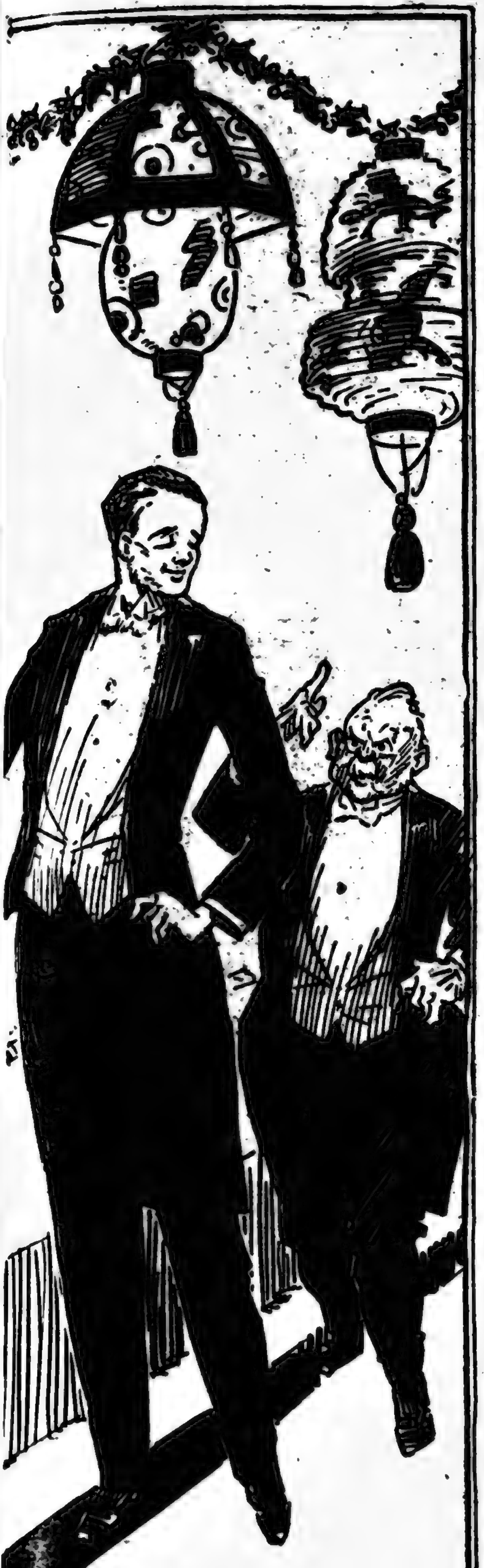
UNDER THE



SELF-

"I'll teach you to kiss my daughter, Sir."

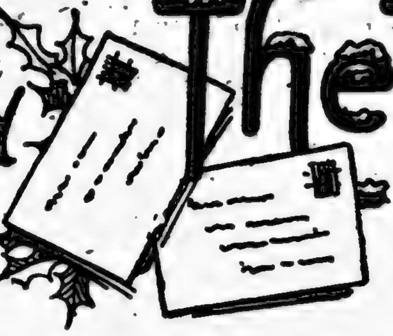
HE MISTLETOE



F- TAUGHT.

"Too late, Sir!
I've just learnt."

Barry Pain—and—The Test



"YOUNG man," said the elderly merchant, as he sipped his cocktail before dinner, "I never married. You never know quite what a woman means except that it is never what she says. The heart of a woman is like a high-walled garden with no doors to it, in a country where aviation is unknown and Christianity has made but little progress. The one thing that I can tell you about that garden is that there is not a single straight path in it, and that every path which appears to lead in one direction really leads in another. Women are a secret society and they are initiated into it very early in life. Jane can't have been more than fifteen at the time and Maud was a year younger."

"Yes?" said the young man, looking puzzled.

"I forgot. You don't know, of course. I must tell you about it. Jane is the child of my married sister and lives at Surbiton. Maud is my brother's little girl and lives at Hampstead. I've been a fair to middling uncle to them. I always sent them ten shillings each at Christmas up to the age of ten years, and after that I made it a pound.

"Well, last Christmas I was taken with a bright idea. I can't think how it happened. I think I must have been reading some silly Oriental story where the king devises a test to settle which of the three suitors shall marry the princess. I thought I'd test the amount of consideration and affection which my two nieces had for me, So I wrote on two sheets of paper: 'With best wishes for Christmas from Uncle George.' I put them into envelopes and I put nothing else in the envelopes. I sent one to Jane at Surbiton and the other to Maud at Hampstead. I wanted to see how they would take it. I rather expected that they would both write to me and point out that by some mistake I had not put the usual enclosure in the letter.

"Well, that is what Maud did. She wrote: 'By some accident I think you forgot to put into the letter what you meant to put in it. There was nothing but the sheet with best wishes on it. I thought you would rather I told you, so that you could carry out your wishes if you wished!'"

"She signed herself 'Your loving niece,' and the letter was quite reasonable. But by the same post I got another letter from Jane. She wrote: 'Thank you so much for the lovely present. You are always so kind and generous to us, and I am so glad that we are all going to meet to-morrow.' Now that letter impressed me. Here was this little girl of fifteen willing apparently to sacrifice her Christmas present altogether rather than let me be annoyed by seeing I had made a foolish mistake. It seemed to me that the test had succeeded. Maud was all right, and Maud should have her sovereign as usual; but Jane had shown that she really had heart, and I decided to give her two sovereigns. Yes, this happened ten years ago. There were real golden sovereigns in those days.

"On the following day there was to be a family re-union at Hampstead—the usual Christmas dinner and all the rest of it. The Surbiton lot were to be there and so was I. Soon after my arrival I tackled Maud and Jane.

"'Maud,' I said, 'I think you were quite right to send me that letter. It was obvious I had made a mistake and there was no harm in pointing it out. Here's your sovereign But now, Jane, tell me why you didn't write the same letter? Why did you pretend that you had received the present all right?'

"Jane blushed modestly. 'I don't think,' she said, 'that a young girl ought to correct grown-up people. Besides, the kindness was in the letter even if the money wasn't.'

"'I see, Jane,' I said. 'Your letter was even more than right. It showed great unselfishness and that is a thing which I appreciate. This year I must give you two sovereigns.'

"Jane was very pleased.

"Well, I don't see what was wrong," said the young man. "You applied your test, and it worked all right. It was most successful."

"Successful? I was baffled and beaten to a frazzle by those two kids. Mind, there was one thing I noticed. When Jane got her extra sovereign, not only did she look very pleased, but Maud looked very pleased also. I put that down to her nice nature. And a few weeks afterwards my brother, Maud's father, who was in the know all the time, gave the show away to me.

"ON the morning that my test letters arrived it happened by some fatal mischance that Jane came up from Surbiton and Maud came down from Hampstead for some Christmas shopping, and that they were to meet by appointment in Piccadilly Circus.

"'I heard from Uncle George this morning,' said Jane. 'I believe he thought he'd enclosed his usual present in the letter, but it wasn't there. He must have forgotten it.'

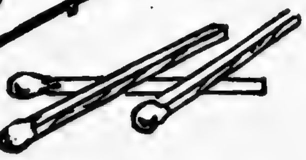
"'Good heavens,' said Maud. 'He's done just the same thing to me. He couldn't have forgotten it both times. This is a trap. We want to be careful.'

"Well, they guessed the whole thing. They decided to send me one letter of each kind, and they tossed a penny in a tea-shop to settle which should write which. They also agreed that in the event of either letter securing a bonus, the bonus should be equally divided between them. So they made thirty shillings each that year. Maud confided the whole story to her father, and, like a fool, he laughed about it. What do you think yourself?"

Henry Kilbarrack

Writes of Love at first Sight

A Christmas Eve Match



THE big, heavy man puffed his big Corona almost in the faces of the two guests whom he had brought with him to his Christmas Eve dinner at his favourite corner in the grill-room of the Café Royal.

John Denning liked the Café Royal. He liked the heavy gilt of its decorations. He was himself, he thanked Heaven, pretty heavily gilt, and did not care who knew it. Money talks, was his favourite aphorism, and nobody criticised its grammar.

He was quite enjoying himself to-night. Evelyn Jameson, his charming woman secretary, never looked quite so charming, he thought. She had a band of some shiny, silvery material bound across her smooth black hair, and her eyes were bright with almost a feverish glow of pleasure. Dalton, the City Editor of the *Tribune*, his other guest, was in gay spirits, yielding with cynical good-humour to the spirit of Christmas.

Denning looked from one to the other, and his gaze rested upon his secretary with almost a spoken sense of possession. Why, after all, he thought, should he not marry her? He was rich enough to please himself, and no doubt, with his bulging wealth, he would please her too. If matches are made in Heaven, he reflected that they were usually sold on earth, and he could afford to be a buyer.

At the table next to them a woman was dining alone. They had noticed her looking around, as though expecting someone. She had been disappointed. Again their attention was drawn to her. She had fitted a cigarette into a long amber tube, and was fumbling in her vanity-bag for a match. The waiter, busy with the Christmas Eve congestion, did not notice her want. A young man at the next table rose, approached the lady and tendered her a lighted match. The lady bowed her thanks; he returned to his seat.

John Denning curled his thick lips in a sneer. He had none of the social graces, and rather despised them. "A bounderish intrusion, I call it," he said. "Spoiling the waiter's chances, too. I shall have to make up for it, I suppose."

"Jim Hunt," said Dalton, "is hardly a bounder. I happen to know him quite well, He was a sergeant when the war broke out. and finished as a brigadier-general, with a bar to his D.S.O. I hope he's not spoiling himself in the West End."

"I guess he is," was the reply. "We see him every time we come, don't we, Jameson?" It was one of his affectations to call his secretary by her surname. It flattered his sense of proportion. "You don't care much for that kind of man, Jameson, do you? I guess your preference is not for the school of deportment type, but for those who make a success of life. Thank Heaven, I can afford to come here as often as I like!"

"You have certainly been successful, governor," said his secretary. She called him governor by instruction. It gave him a curious gratification. He liked power and sipped easily of flattery.

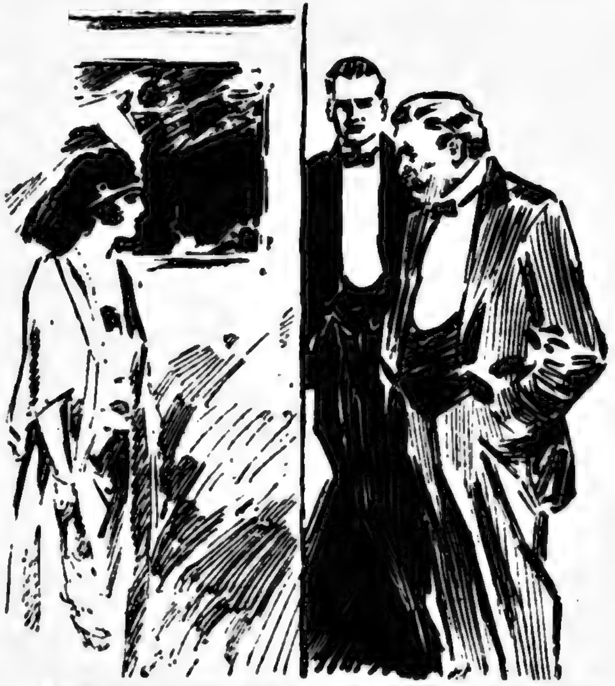
"I'll stand you a case of Pommery, Dalton," he went on, "if I don't know the kind of man Jameson here likes. A man who has done big things in the big markets. That's the fight that brings out the heavy-weight stuff, eh?"

"You are well known to be clever, governor," said his secretary; "I certainly like men who can fight."

"That case of wine is yours, Dalton," Denning went on, helping himself to more drink. "Five years ago I hadn't a sou, and worried about the office rent. Last year, I don't mind telling you, I paid income-tax on ten thousand—and I might have paid a bit more if I'd a mind to—and I didn't do it by marrying a rich woman, either. Now I can please myself."

"You are one of the lucky ones, governor," said his private secretary, "and I'm sure you'll please the lady, too."

"I agree," said the host; "but I haven't tried my luck out yet."



"I'm sorry, governor," said Evelyn, "I must ask you not to discuss Mr. Hunt."

"Contemplating the marriage stakes, old bean?" said Dalton.

"That's as may be," said Denning. "I don't chuck my weight about, and I don't practise dancing-school deportment and pick up acquaintances by tendering matches which waiters are paid to provide. But I needn't worry whether my wife prefers diamonds or pearls. Now let's go on to the dance."

The dance was rather a crowded affair, and as the night wore on developed a Christmassy tendency towards buoyancy. Denning had monopolised most of his secretary's dances, and Dalton had found a newspaper party that engaged most of his attention.

They met again, however, in a pause in the programme, and sat down to chat. Denning was making a desperate effort to pretend that he was enjoying himself, and finding it rather hard. Adipose tissue and a tendency to perspiration go ill with the glamour of a Christmas Eve dance. He was reluctant to admit it, but anno domini had something on him—anno abdomini—Dalton irreverently called it.

His attention was drawn by the young man of the match incident. He came across the room and walked up to Evelyn Jameson.

"Your property, I think," he said, handing her a tassel that had fallen from her fan.

"Thank you very much," said Dalton, as Evelyn bowed her thanks. "Let me introduce you to Miss Jameson—Mr. Jim Hunt."

"We have met before," said Hunt; "and perhaps I may claim a dance."

A moment later they were threading their way through the ball-room, to the visible annoyance and disgust of John Denning. "Young cub," he said to himself. "I'll teach him a lesson—and Jameson too!"

Nor was Denning's wrath appeased when the next dance came and Evelyn had not returned and could not be seen in the ball-room. Presently she appeared, and came over to Denning to apologise.

"I hope you will forgive me," she said; "Mr. Hunt had something rather important to say to me, and delayed me."

"Well," he said, "I have something important to say, too. I'm not going to dance any more, and I'm going to take you home. In fact," he said, somewhat hastily, as Dalton came over to them, "I've decided to marry you as soon as you wish." After which rather surprising sentence he paused and mopped his brow.

"I know," he resumed as Evelyn stood confusedly looking at him, "it's an unofficial way to propose. But I'm no fool. I've watched you. I know the kind of man you like—the fellows who have worked their way up, who know what's what, and can buy cheap and sell dear—not fellows like that match-distributing bounder you have been dancing with."

"I'm sorry, governor," said Evelyn; "I must ask you not to discuss Mr. Hunt."

"Why not?" said Denning angrily.

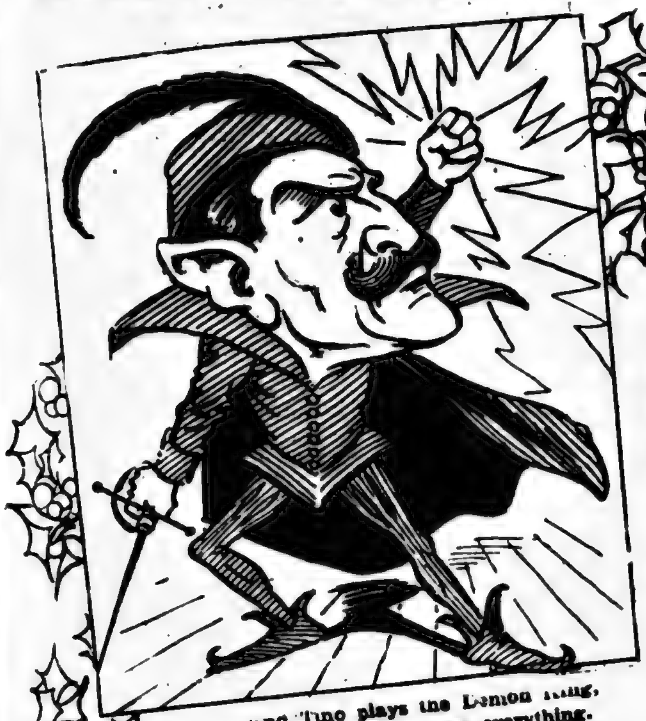
"Because," said Evelyn, "he anticipated you by one dance, and—asked me to marry him. You see, I knew him before. We met in the Corner House one evening over a match. Now we have made a match of it. I am going to marry Mr. Hunt next month."

"Bravo! Evelyn," said Dalton, who had just come up to hear this admission. "And that case of Pommery goes to you for your nuptials. I didn't win it, but Denning thought I did. I wish you every luck."

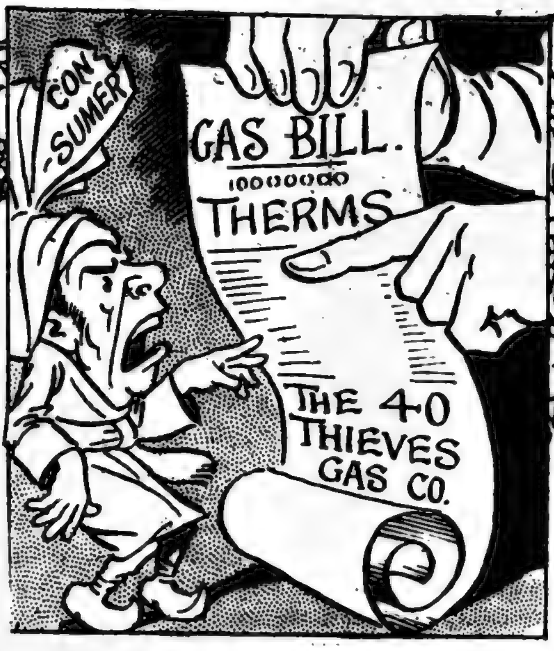
"Well I'm jiggered," said Denning, "but, then, I always thought women were fools. They never know what they want."

"Dear governor," said Evelyn, "don't let us argue on Christmas Eve. The worst of it is that even the most foolish of them sometimes do know what they don't want."

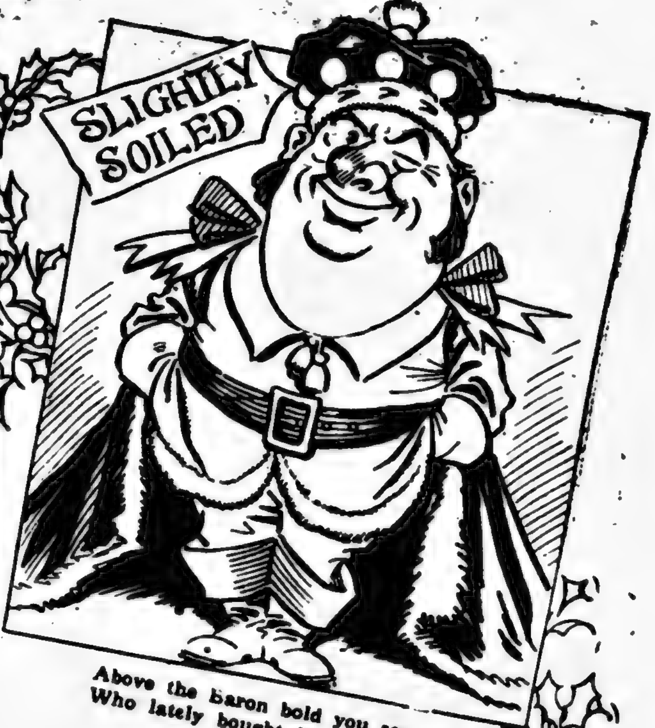
Frank Holland's Panto Parodies



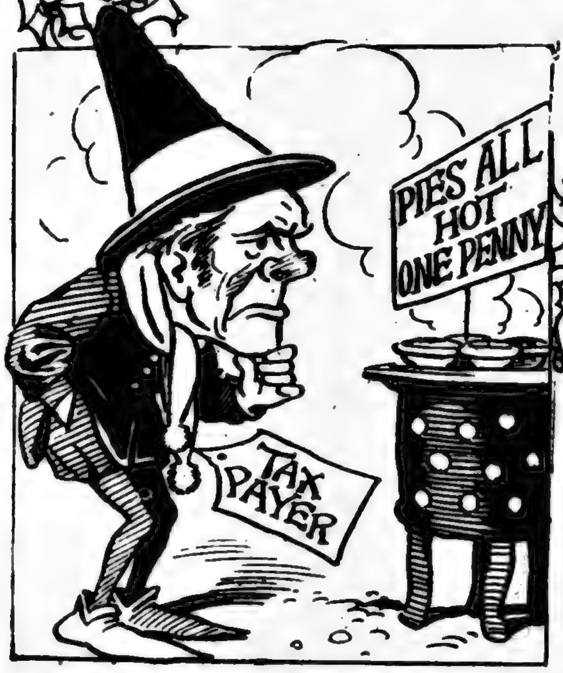
And Tino plays the Demon King,
Who puts a curse on everything.


CON-SUMER
GAS BILL.
10000000 THERMS
THE 40 THIEVES GAS CO.

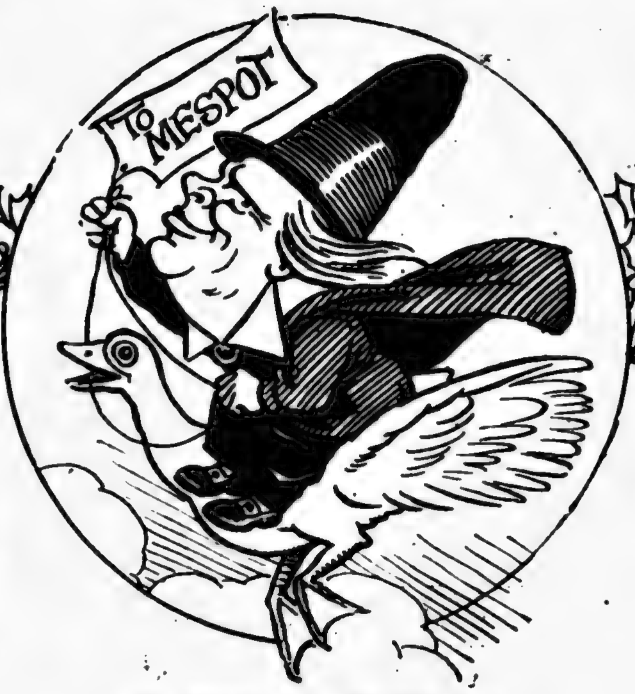
The Forty Thieves are played by firms,
Who sell their gas to us by "Therms."


SLIGHTLY SOILED

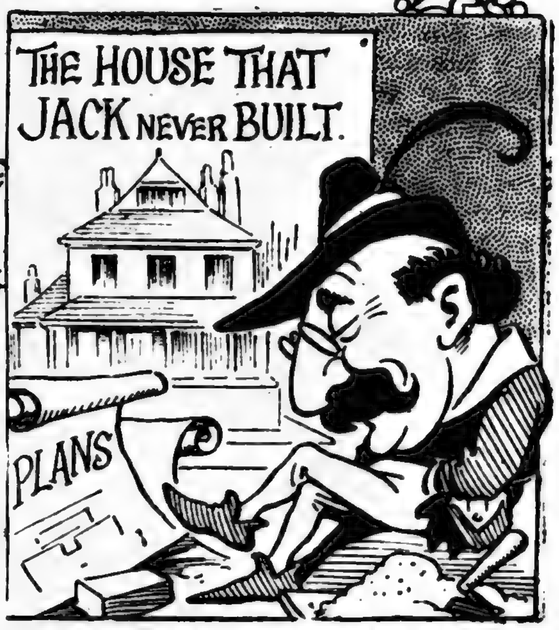
Above the Baron bold you see,
Who lately bought his barony.


PIES ALL HOT ONE PENNY
TAX PAYER

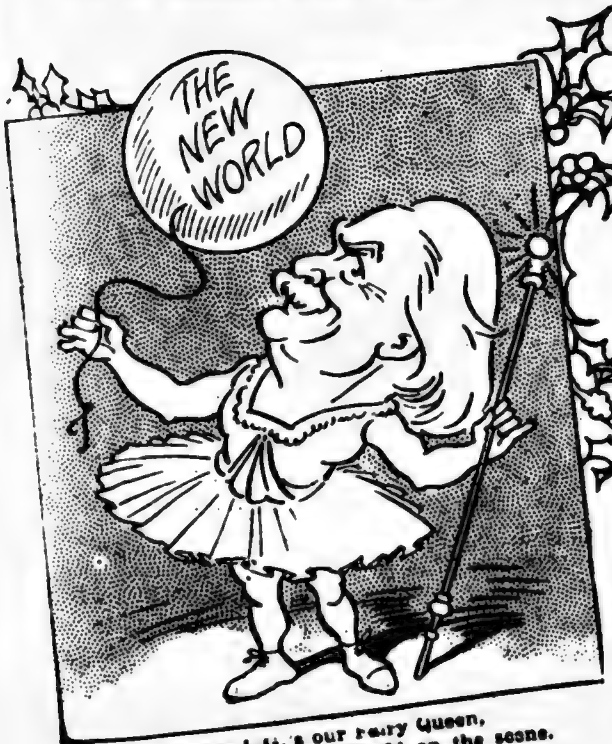
Here's Simple Simon—one of many,
Who find themselves without a penny.



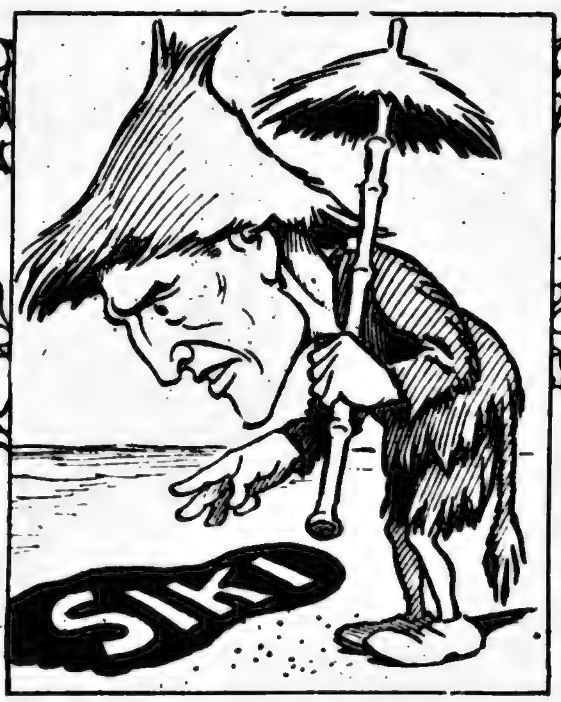
Then Winston on a wild-goose chase,
He takes Old Mother Goose's place.


THE HOUSE THAT JACK NEVER BUILT.
PLANS

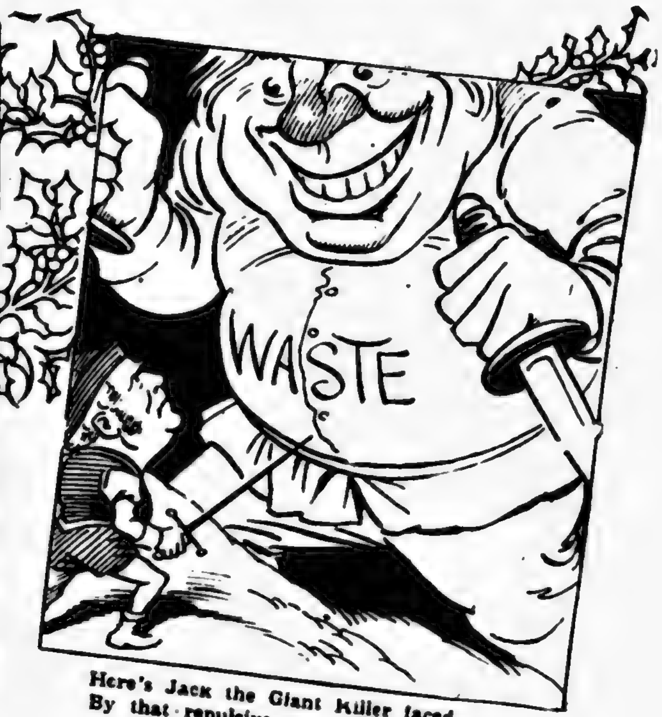
The part of Jack by Mond is filled,
And here's the House he didn't build.


THE NEW WORLD

Of course, L.G.'s our Fairy Queen,
He brings the New World on the scene.



And tho' he didn't want to do so,
Carpentier plays the part of Crusoe.



Here's Jack the Giant Killer faced,
By that repulsive monster "Waste."

Ashley Sterne tells us

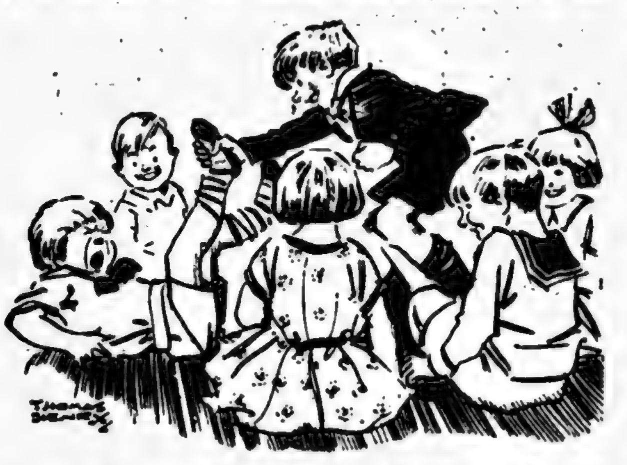
How to Make Party

A WELL-ORGANISED Christmas party can be made one of the jolliest functions imaginable; a badly-managed one, on the other hand, can be made so dull and dismal that, by contrast, a ratepayers' meeting would be a hilarious entertainment.

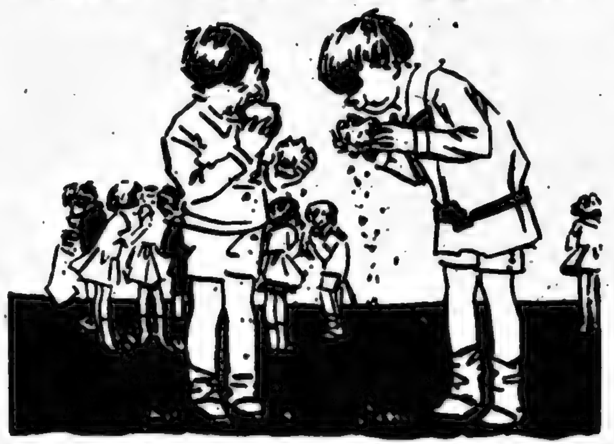
I speak, of course, of the juvenile party. Adult parties need no special organisation. All that is necessary is to distend one's guests with a generous allotment of heavy food, have them subsequently carried into the drawing-room and dumped into easy chairs, and then dope them with port until they attain that condition of pleasing Nirvana which causes them to snore blissfully, though noisily, for the remaining period of their stay under your roof.

Children, however, rightly expect a more active, though not less nourishing, form of entertainment, and if it be your intention this Christmas to throng your halls with a joyous band of bright, clean faces (smelling strongly of toilet-soap and hair-oil), it is certainly incumbent upon you carefully to consider the type of entertainment best suited to juvenile needs. This forethought will obviate the risk of making the ghastly mistake perpetrated by some well-meaning but ignorant friends of mine, who, themselves childless, decided a few years ago to give a Christmas party to the children of their friends.

IN sublime ignorance of the kind of diversion in which children usually indulge on these festive occasions, they engaged the services of the Rev. Soakleigh Tippleton, who, with the help of a magic lantern and a gross of vividly coloured slides which would have made the *Aurora Borealis* (had it been present) pale its ineffectual fires, delivered a stirring three-hour address on the Drink Peril, which culminated in the display of a picture of a gentleman in the throes of *delirium tremens*. The spectacle of a series of huge pink lizards with green stripes perched on the foot-rail of the sufferer's bed playing "Adeste Fideles" on purple trombones so paralysed the children with fright that it cost my friends three bottles of brandy and two of sal-volatile before the last of them recovered his senses; and even the subsequent lavish distribution of jewelled crackers, containing gems worth their weight in monkey-nuts, did little to disperse the feeling aroused in the children's minds that they had been the victims of a particularly cruel and callous practical joke.



" . . . the wrong slipper with some child's foot inside is sometimes grabbed by mistake . . . ."



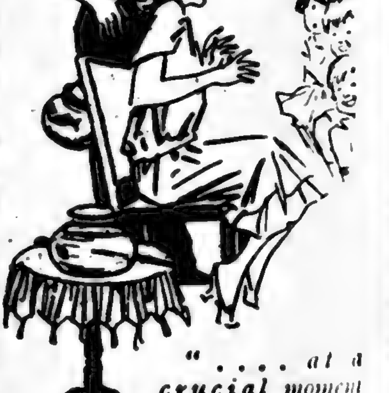
" . . . . the strewn fragments of meringue. . .

Let us, then, profitably consider ways and means of making our projected party "go" in such a manner as shall make our little guests return home with the feeling in their hearts (to say nothing of their tummies) that they spent a red-letter day in our care—a feeling of which even a subsequent prolonged and monotonous diet of bismuth and sodium bicarbonate cannot wholly deprive them.

We will assume that our guests have been invited for three o'clock in the afternoon—a convenient hour from the economic point of view, as, having been well inflated with turkey and pudding a short time previously, it will not be necessary to offer them further refreshment on arrival. So soon as they have all assembled it is a wise move to set them playing simple and amusing games provocative of mirth and *bonhomie*. These should be of a not too boisterous or elaborate nature. The disadvantages of throwing your bathroom open for the purpose of water polo, or of allowing your drawing-room, stocked with your carefully selected *objets de vertu*, to be used for hi-cockolorum or rounders are so obvious as to defy comment.

GAMES such as postman's knock or hunt-the-slipper are admirably suited to the occasion, though when the latter is played it is always as well for an adult to supervise it, as, in the mad excitement of the chase, the wrong slipper with some child's foot inside it is sometimes grabbed by mistake. I vividly recall a most distressing incident that I once witnessed during the progress of this fascinating game. A small child, aged three, was inadvertently grabbed by the slipper and violently hustled underneath the legs of the crouching circle for nearly twenty minutes before the error was discovered. It was retrieved badly bruised and half asphyxiated, and the incident threw an atmosphere of gloom over the subsequent proceedings, which even an attractive performance by a troupe of educated fleas (exhibited by their trainer, a retired seaside boarding-house proprietor) only succeeded in partially dissipating.

AFTER the various games have been enjoyed for a couple of hours or so, it is as well to refresh your languishing and perspiring guests with a substantial tea, which should be of as rich and indigestibe a nature as possible. However delectable your entertainment may otherwise prove, no child ever goes home thoroughly satisfied and happy unless it has acquired that state of stodgy repletion which in an adult would be best described as acute abdominal discomfort. Hence it will not be sufficient merely to slap a slice of bread and dripping (or other lubricant) and a couple of cracknels into each child's hand. They will reasonably expect pabulum of a more luxurious and prodigal nature; and to this end you should supply several hundredweight of heavily buttered crumpets, jam-roll and iced cake, besides a capacious urnful of thick tea which has been allowed to stand an hour and a half in the imposing, cistern-like receptacle which you have hired for the purpose from the local confectioner's.

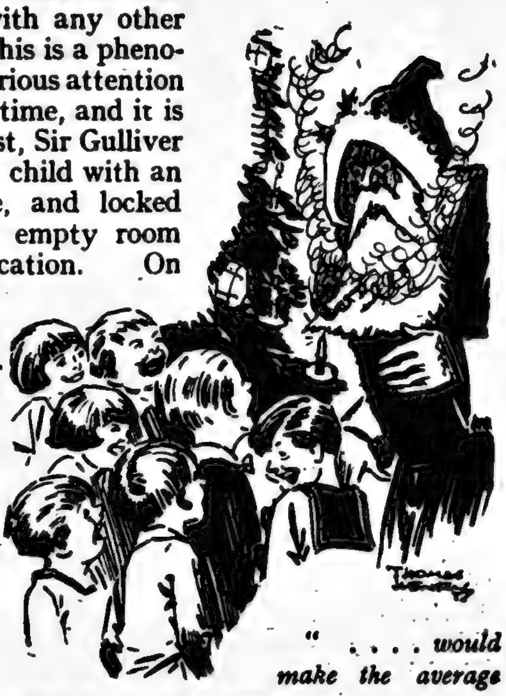


" . . . . at a crucial moment he dropped a couple . . . . down the lady's corsage . . . ."

I do not advise you, however, to supply meringues, unless the cases be made of plaster-of-Paris, Portland cement, or other inefragable material. Experience has shown that, popular as these toothsome delicacies

a Christmas Go

are, a child can create more disorder and litter with a meringue than with any other known form of refreshment. This is a phenomenon which has engaged the serious attention of physicists for a considerable time, and it is reported of the eminent scientist, Sir Gulliver Stodge, that he once supplied a child with an ordinary commercial meringue, and locked the child up in a completely empty room during the process of mastication. On entering the room thereafter, the apartment was found to have all the appearance of a violently disrupted lime-kiln, while the strewn fragments of meringue were sufficient when collected completely to fill two pantechnicons and a dust-cart.



" . . . . would make the average pantomime comedian green with envy."

Instead of meringues, then, I advise sweets of a glutinous and viscous nature flavoured strongly with peppermint or aniseed. They last a considerable time, and your little guests should be permitted to take as many as can be squeezed into a hot and clammy hand into the drawing-room for consumption during the second part of the entertainment.

FOR this it is frequently advisable to secure the services of a professional entertainer, as by this device the now rapidly wearying host and hostess are relieved of much responsibility. Conjurors generally prove to be the most popular, especially those who specialise in the production of rabbits, goldfish and guinea-pigs from such simple articles as an antimacassar or even from one's clothing. It should, however, be borne in mind that only a conjuror of recognised ability must be engaged, as indifferent performers are liable to be lacking in that high degree of skill so needful in an exhibition of this kind. I remember once witnessing an inexpert conjuror attempting the feat of extracting goldfish from a lady's back hair. Unfortunately at a crucial moment he dropped a couple of his slippery confederates down the lady's *corsage*, with the result that she was carried from the room in hysterics, the while her maid frantically angled for the struggling, suffocating fish with the glove-stretchers.

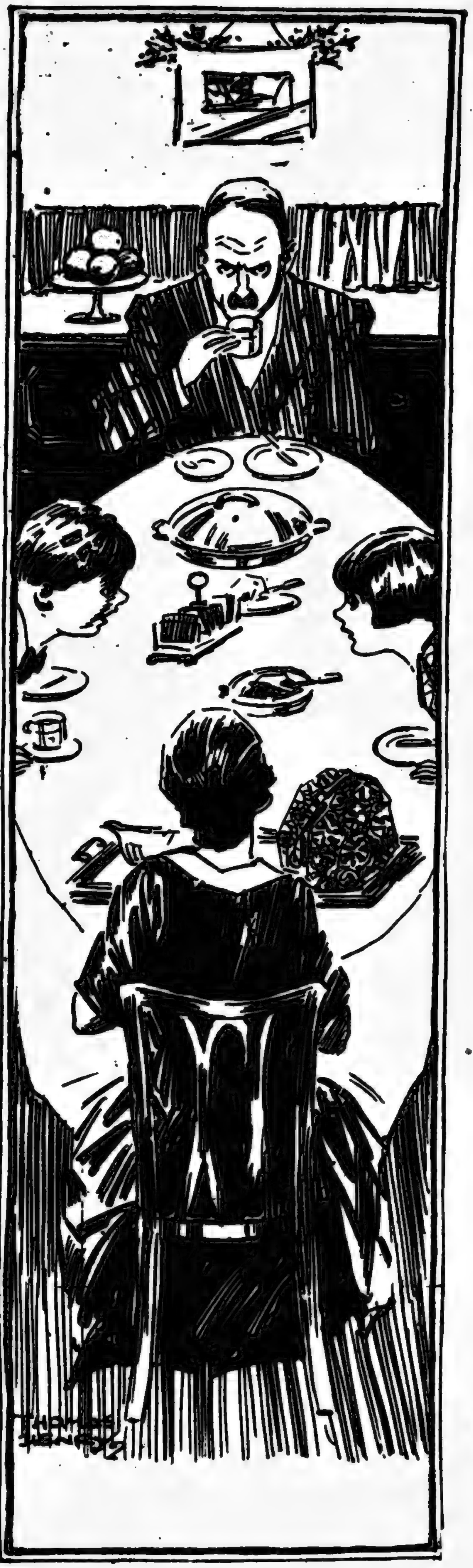
Also, I would not engage a Punch and Judy, for although this forms a most delightful *al fresco* entertainment for the little ones, I do not think that a crowded, excited drawing-room full of noisy youngsters is a suitable atmosphere into which to bring a highly sensitive dog afflicted with the artistic temperament (as Toby usually is). Under stress of great emotion small boys in the audience are often constrained to shout out "Rats! Good dog! Fetch 'em out!" or some other similar form of address, and a Toby-dog thus stimulated has been known to leap from its perch into the audience, and bite a dozen or more of its members before it could be secured in the hearthrug and returned to its owner.

Finally, the *piece de resistance* of your entertainment may fittingly take the form of a Christmas tree upon which you have hung presents suitable for each one of your guests. The climax may be made still further enjoyable if you care to impersonate Santa Claus. This is easily done by borrowing the cook's red flannel dressing-gown, trimming it with holly and cotton-wool, and equipping yourself with a white wig and beard. In this character you can then distribute the presents, at the same time addressing a few well-chosen words to each recipient in a quavery voice reminiscent of the Oldest Inhabitant with an attack of bronchial catarrh.

If, in addition, you can manage to set alight your whiskers or the sleeve of cook's dressing-gown by inserting it in one of the candles upon the tree, you will probably reap a round of laughter and applause that would make the average pantomime comedian sick with envy.

This little bit of by-play, however, usually transpires by accident anyway, and it would be as well to be on your guard against any unexpected conflagration. As a boy I well remember seeing my uncle Peter burst into flames at one of these Christmas tree functions, and it was not until the whole of his left ear had been consumed that we were able to blow my blazing relative out with the help of the kitchen bellows and a bicycle pump.

THESE are the main points which, in my opinion, will make a Christmas party "go," and any reader following my advice will, I feel sure, reap his reward by hearing the same formula as that which annually greets me as I speed my parting guests: "Thank you very much for your splendid party, and mother says will you please let her have the teaspoons back to-morrow."



CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE

BOBBY: "I tell you Father Christmas *isn't* a Fairy. I know, 'cos I heard what he said when he banged his knee on the bedstead."

A. J. Mason's Ghost Story for Bachelors only

The Ghost of Sprockleby Hall

THE House Agent and the Millionaire stood in the porch of the tenantless Sprockleby Hall. To the most casual observer, if there was one, it was clear that the House Agent was the life and soul of the conversation.

The speaker drove home his points with astonishing frequency by quick, impatient gestures with pencil and umbrella alternately. But there was an anxious light in his ferrety little eyes that showed him none too confident of the progress of affairs.

Sir Josiah Scrimgeour, you see, was a hard old nut to crack, and Sprockleby Hall—old without being particularly interesting—was a difficult stone on which to crack him.

"Now if only Lady Scrimgeour could see the Hall," hazarded the Agent craftily, "I feel quite certain——"

"There is no Lady Scrimgeour," put in Sir Josiah coldly. "Nor, for that matter, is there likely to be."

The Agent was nothing if not persistent.

"Well, well," he said thoughtfully, "after all, perhaps the Hall is more essentially a home for a man. Everything a single man could want, and all within a stone's threw. Hunting, shooting, fishing, golf—why, it's a regular bachelor's paradise."

For all that, the Millionaire still seemed loath to come to a decision. If there was any hustling to be done, Josiah Scrimgeour was accustomed to doing it himself. Certainly he had no intention of being hurried this afternoon, whether he wanted the Hall or not.

Moreover, when Josiah bought anything with the intention of paying for it, he was a man to insist on a satisfactory return for his money.

His shilling tins of pork, beans and macaroni (to which he owed his affluence) contained, he argued, the maximum quantity of pork, beans and macaroni that could profitably be put into a tin for a shilling. Even his enemies were willing to admit that in the matter of beans and macaroni his generosity had been extraordinary. So that, on principle, Sir Josiah would only lay down a thousand pounds when he was tolerably certain of being able to pick up at least two thousand pounds' worth of Kaffirs, acid drops, titles, or whatever was his need of the moment.

"I'll give ten thousand for the Hall," he grunted—"not a penny more."

The other looked appealingly towards heaven, as if invoking the aid of the patron saint of house agents.

"But, my dear sir," he protested, "this magnificent residence is alone worth that money. When you buy Sprockleby Hall, *you buy something else as well.* Listen"—he dropped his voice to a low whisper—"the place is haunted! Each New Year's Eve a ghost appears in the west wing of the house."

The Millionaire caught his breath sharply. All his life he had sought after some tangible evidence of the spirit world.

"A real ghost?" he asked hoarsely.

"A fully certificated and genuine specimen," asserted the House Agent. "This ghost is under the patronage of Conan Doyle, Vale Owen, and the Duchess of——"

"Another thousand for the spook," rapped out the Millionaire; "that's my last word."

At eleven thousand pounds the Hall changed ownership, and on the way home the Agent bought himself a cigar.

* * * * * *

WHEN first the new moon shed its silvery light into the picture gallery of Sprockleby Hall on the following New Year's Eve, the old gentlemen who looked down from their frames simply blinked in astonishment.

Instead of the cobweb-ridden and deserted passage that they knew so well, they saw that the corridor had been swept and polished, the walls re-painted and the windows cleaned. The atmosphere, too, seemed unusually odourless. Nor was that all. Up in a corner, armed with a heavy poker and a vacuum-flask, sat the new owner of Sprockleby Hall, Sir Josiah Scrimgeour.

For some minutes no sound save his heavy breathing could be heard. Then, as a distant chime proclaimed the hour of midnight, there came the click of a latch, and a door at the end of the passage swung slowly open.

An eerie light splashed about the threshold, and a low, sepulchral moaning broke the tense silence.

Sir Josiah, so far from being in the least perturbed, merely shuffled his feet impatiently.

"You're late," he said rudely, as a green transparent figure glided round the corner. "Thought you were never coming. Still, now you're here, I may as well have my money's worth out of you. You can begin your act right away."

The ghost removed his head and tucked it under his arm.

"From humans," he croaked, "I brook no interference. I go my way, and woe betide the——"

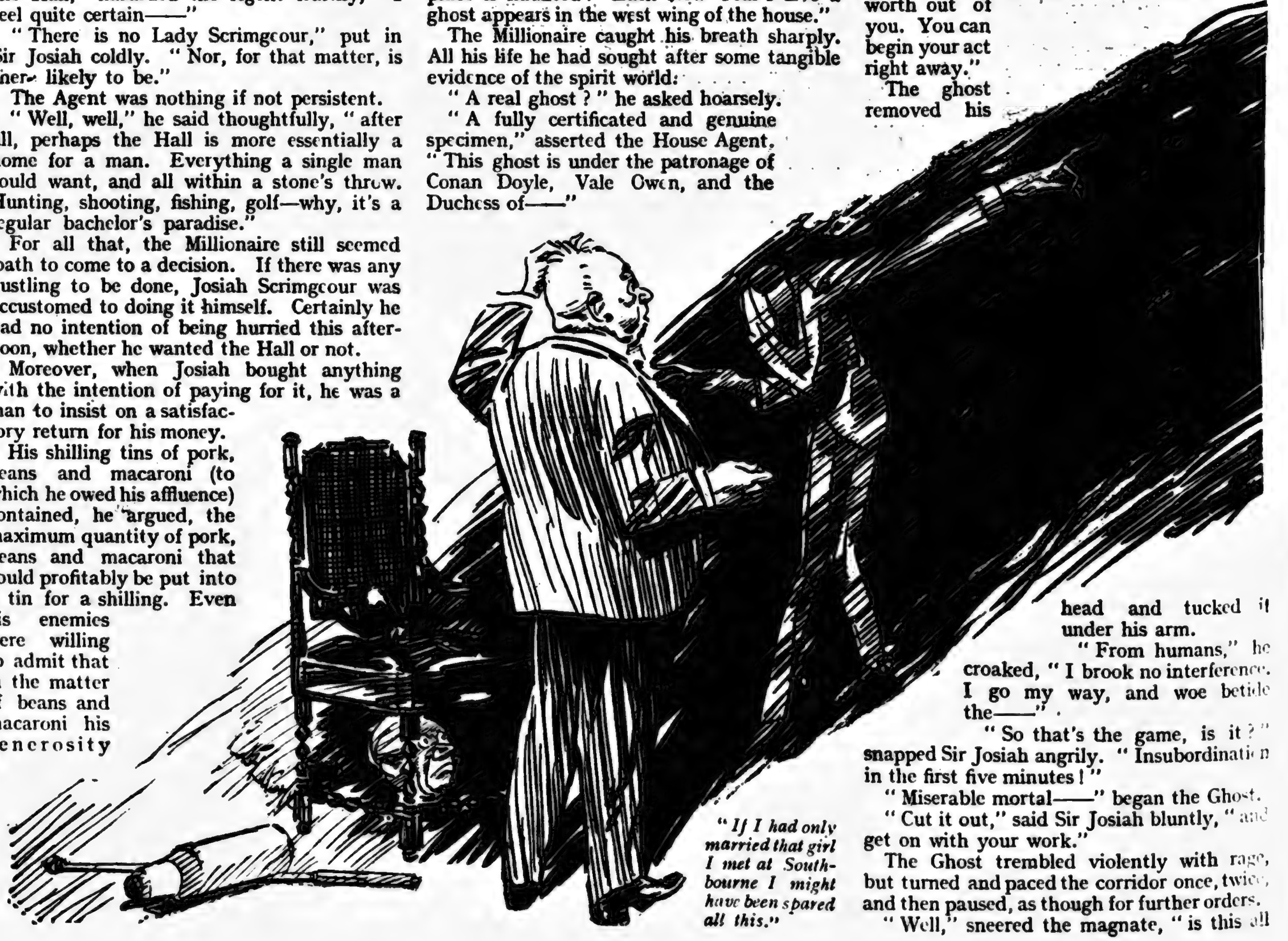
"So that's the game, is it?" snapped Sir Josiah angrily. "Insubordination in the first five minutes!"

"Miserable mortal——" began the Ghost.

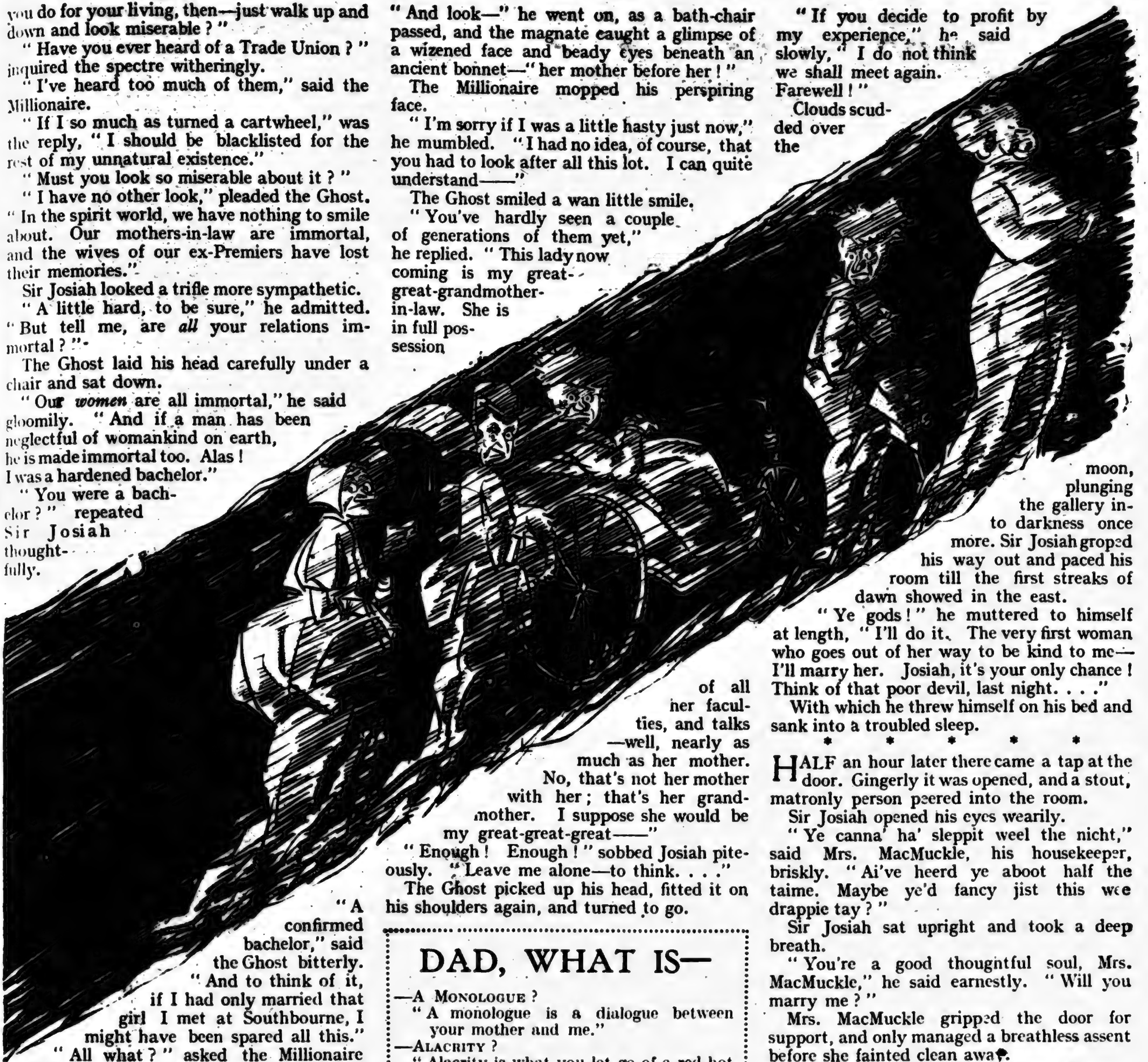
"Cut it out," said Sir Josiah bluntly, "and get on with your work."

The Ghost trembled violently with rage, but turned and paced the corridor once, twice, and then paused, as though for further orders.

"Well," sneered the magnate, "is this all



"If I had only married that girl I met at Southbourne I might have been spared all this."



you do for your living, then—just walk up and down and look miserable ? "

" Have you ever heard of a Trade Union ? " inquired the spectre witheringly.

" I've heard too much of them," said the Millionaire.

" If I so much as turned a cartwheel," was the reply, " I should be blacklisted for the rest of my unnatural existence."

" Must you look so miserable about it ? "

" I have no other look," pleaded the Ghost. " In the spirit world, we have nothing to smile about. Our mothers-in-law are immortal, and the wives of our ex-Premiers have lost their memories."

Sir Josiah looked a trifle more sympathetic.

" A little hard, to be sure," he admitted. " But tell me, are *all* your relations immortal ? "

The Ghost laid his head carefully under a chair and sat down.

" Our *women* are all immortal," he said gloomily. " And if a man has been neglectful of womankind on earth, he is made immortal too. Alas ! I was a hardened bachelor."

" You were a bachelor ? " repeated Sir Josiah thoughtfully.

" A confirmed bachelor," said the Ghost bitterly. " And to think of it, if I had only married that girl I met at Southbourne, I might have been spared all this."

" All what ? " asked the Millionaire a little tremulously.

" I will show you," said the spectre grimly. " Watch through that door."

Sir Josiah did as he was told. In a minute or two a bulky but transparent lady waddled past the doorway and filtered through the wall beyond.

" My wife that should have been," explained the Ghost. " Had I married her on earth, I need not have married her here. Mortals should be told these things."

" Indeed, they should," agreed the other warmly.

An imperious-looking old lady, short but amazingly active, next passed the dim-lit threshold.

" Her mother," murmured the Ghost sadly. " A tartar, if ever there was one."

" Ah, yes," muttered Sir Josiah. " And who, may I ask, supports these ladies ? "

" Who but I ? " whimpered the other. " And look—" he went on, as a bath-chair passed, and the magnate caught a glimpse of a wizened face and beady eyes beneath an ancient bonnet—" her mother before her ! "

The Millionaire mopped his perspiring face.

" I'm sorry if I was a little hasty just now," he mumbled. " I had no idea, of course, that you had to look after all this lot. I can quite understand——"

The Ghost smiled a wan little smile.

" You've hardly seen a couple of generations of them yet," he replied. " This lady now coming is my great-great-grandmother-in-law. She is in full possession of all her faculties, and talks—well, nearly as much as her mother. No, that's not her mother with her ; that's her grandmother. I suppose she would be my great-great-great——"

" Enough ! Enough ! " sobbed Josiah piteously. " Leave me alone—to think. . . ."

The Ghost picked up his head, fitted it on his shoulders again, and turned to go.

DAD, WHAT IS—

—A Monologue ?
" A monologue is a dialogue between your mother and me."

—Alacrity ?
" Alacrity is what you let go of a red-hot poker with."

—An Optimist ?
" An optimist, my son, is a man who goes out to America to open a corkscrew factory."

—Seniority ?
" Seniority is what keeps a clever lieutenant a clever lieutenant."

—Repartee ?
" Repartee is what you thought of after the other fellow had gone home."

—Pep ?
" Pep is the stuff that only requires a successful business in order to create a successful business."

—Platonic Love ?
" Platonic love, laddie, is the thing they get divorces with."

—A Renegade ?
" A renegade is a man who doesn't find out till half-time on which side his bread is buttered."

" If you decide to profit by my experience," he said slowly, " I do not think we shall meet again. Farewell ! "

Clouds scudded over the moon, plunging the gallery into darkness once more. Sir Josiah groped his way out and paced his room till the first streaks of dawn showed in the east.

" Ye gods ! " he muttered to himself at length, " I'll do it. The very first woman who goes out of her way to be kind to me—I'll marry her. Josiah, it's your only chance ! Think of that poor devil, last night. . . ."

With which he threw himself on his bed and sank into a troubled sleep.

* * * * *

HALF an hour later there came a tap at the door. Gingerly it was opened, and a stout, matronly person peered into the room.

Sir Josiah opened his eyes wearily.

" Ye canna' ha' sleppit weel the nicht," said Mrs. MacMuckle, his housekeeper, briskly. " Ai've heerd ye aboot half the taime. Maybe ye'd fancy jist this wee drappie tay ? "

Sir Josiah sat upright and took a deep breath.

" You're a good thoughtful soul, Mrs. MacMuckle," he said earnestly. " Will you marry me ? "

Mrs. MacMuckle gripped the door for support, and only managed a breathless assent before she fainted clean away.

* * * * *

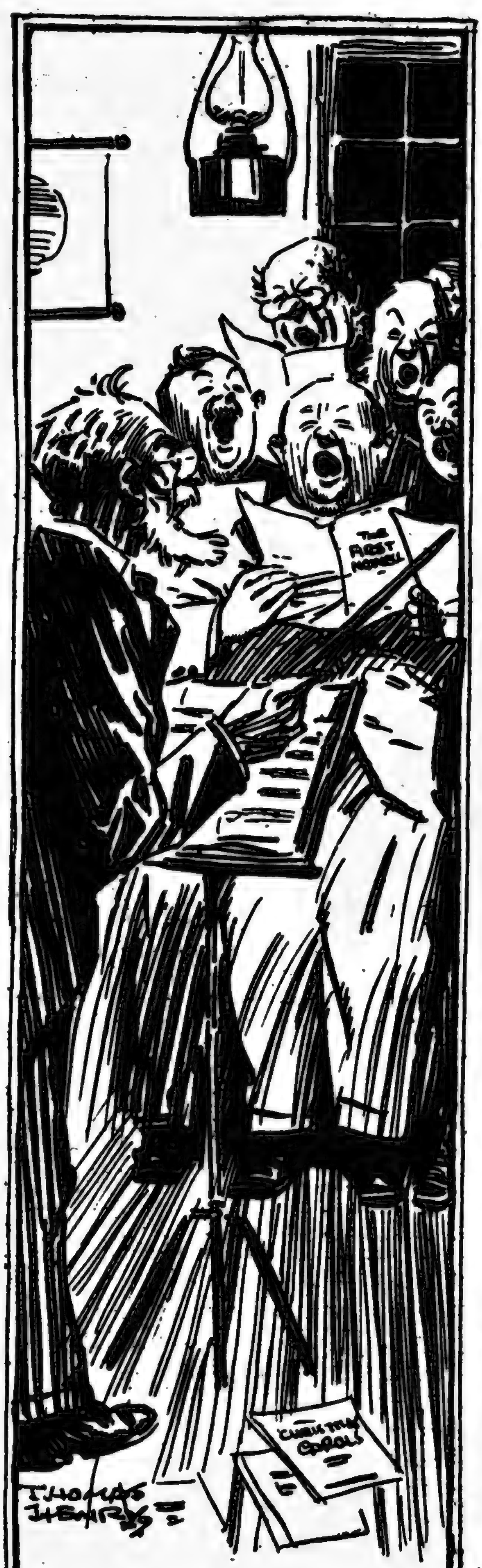
SIX months later the Ghost paused in his evening stroll through the graveyard of Sprockleby Church. He studied interestedly a new gravestone which was being erected.

TO THE MEMORY OF
Josiah Scrimgeour, Bart.,
Born March 11th, 1858.
Died June 20th, 1922.
Requiescat in Pace.

" Dear me," he exclaimed with amazement, as he saw the name that was engraved upon it, " sooner even than I had expected ! "

With which he returned light-heartedly to his beloved solitude in the west wing of Sprockleby Hall. There are other ways of getting rid of a man, he congratulated himself, besides hitting him on the head with a hammer.

Harold Begbie on What it Might Be



ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

The Conductor: "Stop! Stop! How many more times am I to tell you that there isn't a aitch in Nowell?"

AT present it brings an uneasy feeling to the mind of the average decent man—this festival of Christmas.

He says to himself: "Is it really true?" and begins to think of theological dogmas. Does he believe in the Annunciation, in the Virgin Birth, in the Resurrection, in the Atonement? This story of the manger, and the star and the shepherds—does he truthfully hold that it is a fact of history?

The way out of his difficulty is both broad and straight. Christmas is the festival of children. Let him forget his troublesome brain and think only of the children—their young fresh hearts and their ostrich-like stomachs. A good time for the children, that is Christmas: and what with turkeys, plum puddings, and crackers, how simple it is to give children a good time—if you don't happen to be out of work, or if death is not overshadowing your home. How easy to hang up a stocking, to say "A Merry Christmas," to eat more than is good for one, and not to think!

THUS it comes about that Christmas makes no difference to the world. It is a spree. Sprees are very likeable things, especially children's sprees, but no spree ever yet changed the history of mankind. Christmas comes and Christmas goes, and the world keeps on in its old dull way, blundering into one crisis after another, sliding into one war after another, shouting its stupid battlecries, lifting its bloody sword of strife and contention, shutting its eyes to beauty, losing its faith in all those wonderful things which make the universe a glory for the poet and a continual miracle for the man of science. Christmas does not pull it up. Christmas does not rebuke it. Christmas does not save it.

But look at Christmas from the man's point of view, not only from the child's: look at it from the point of view of the average European adult, who is rather famished just now, who feels himself caught in a trap, who doesn't know what to think or whom to follow. Such a man, on whose shoulders civilisation presses heavily indeed, wants to know what Christmas means to him, means to human life.

IN other words, what does Christmas mean in the history of mind? It means that a Man was born into the world who addressed Himself to the greatest problems of human life, proclaimed a definite theory of existence and soon after was put to death by the religious leaders of His nation. His birth, then, is only of importance because of His theory of existence. We should never have heard of Him except for that theory of existence which cost Him His life. Therefore, surely, the one sensible way of keeping His birth must be by examining that theory of existence. Is it a good theory or a bad theory? If a good one, should we not order our whole life by it? If a bad one, why bother to keep His birthday?

What was His theory of existence?

He took the values of common sense into His two hands, and tore them up before the eyes of all mankind. He said that common sense was a blunderer. Uncommon sense, the sense of the spirit, was essential to a true view of life. Uncommon sense perceives that to give is a better thing than to receive, that to forgive is a greater thing than to punish, that to serve is a higher thing than to rule. He summed up all His new values in a single word. He made it the rule of human life, and proclaimed it as the law of the universe. He summed up all he had to say and all he had to give in the word Love.

REFLECT for a moment on this thought: What would men say if M. Poincaré devoted a speech to Love, if the *Daily Mail* came out with a leading article on Love, if Mr. De Valera published an encyclical on Love, if Lenin issued a protocol on Love, if Lord Birkenhead wrote a letter to the *Times* on Love, and if Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb sang a duet on Love to a Trades Union Congress?

Reflection will convince you at once, so absurd are these ideas, that the theory of existence announced by Jesus is not a working theory: that no leader of men believes in it. A debate in the House of Commons on the theory of Love would provide our humorists with an almost infinite inspiration. It would be the joke of the world. You feel certain of that: the very supposition of such a thing strikes you as grotesque.

But does any man in his senses believe that this word Love can have played so tremendous a part in the history of the human race, if it is a word of no account? Plato used it. Augustine used it. Francis of Assisi used it. Pascal used it. Newton used it. Shelley used it. Tolstoy used it. Is there among our politicians a greater than these? Is there one utterance of Mr. Lloyd George which will outlive the writings of Plato?

FURTHER: dare any leader of men openly preach that to hate one's enemy and to seek one's own is the rule of life, the law of the universe? Dare any statesman contradict Jesus in so many words? They all contradict Him in their actions, Jingoes and Labour men alike, but which of them will get up and tell the world that unselfish love is bunkum?

The politician acts on that unuttered principle, acts as if love were bunkum, and the result is desolation, murder, and bankruptcy. It led to 1914: it developed into 1918. It expressed itself first in bayonets, poison gas and bombing aeroplanes, then in the pens and ink of Versailles. It has had a good innings. It has run up a mighty score. And even now it is not out. Who that pauses by the Cenotaph in Whitehall believes that it represents anything vital in our national politics, who takes it for a monument of British principle? It commemorates self-sacrifice . . . for what? An ideal. Where is now that ideal? Look for it in the European exchanges.

SUPPOSE these politicians are all wrong, and that Jesus was right. Suppose for a moment that Jesus was wiser, nearer to the truth of the universe, than Mr. Lloyd George, or Lord Birkenhead, or Mr. De Valera, or Mr. Tom Mann. Suppose that we are all living under a delusion, just as the whole world lived for centuries under the delusion of Ptolemaic astronomy. Remembr that Tycho Brahé, a great astronomer, opposed himself to the astronomy of Copernicus. Remember that Harvey was almost martyred by men of science for his theory of blood circulation. Remind yourself that it is infinitely possible for the human brain to deceive itself. Convince yourself that men lived for countless centuries by theories which now we know to have had no relation to fact—educated men, men of such vast intellect as Aristotle.

Are we doing the same? Are we quite sure that we are not living under a most fatal and destructive delusion?

It is not unreasonable to wonder whether the whole political future of mankind may not lie in the discovery that Jesus was right, that His theory of existence works, indeed that only by ordering its life according to that rejected theory can the human race escape moral chaos and physical desolation. Such a discovery would change the whole face of existence. It would make Christmas the feast of universal brotherhood.

THINK what it would mean to this earth if all the theologies of all the religions of mankind were laid aside, and every teacher of man's soul devoted himself to the single task of convincing men that Love is the one path of security, fruitfulness, and content—the one way of escape from utmost chaos and irredeemable calamity.

Think what it would mean if Christmas was kept in all the nations of the earth solely as the festival of Love: if the peacemakers were more numerous than the warmakers, if a considerable majority of mankind acted on the principle of unselfishness, if disinterested service almost entirely displaced guilty greed and shameful self-seeking, if humility and tenderness and sweetness were accounted the only good manners, if all the heart and intellect of a world at last truly civilised assembled in a confraternity of nations to make right, reason and the will of God prevail. A world inspired by the teaching of Jesus, what a world it would be!

THIS idea might be absurd if its antithesis worked. But is there a living soul who can now say, "Peace on earth, good will among men," without a sense of bitterest irony? Surely not among the statesmen of Europe, Materialism, in rags and tatters, is living on a dole. It has been weighed in the balances, not of God, but of practical men, and has been found wanting.

Even if it be in a fit of despair, humanity may yet turn to idealism to save it from destruction. And in that day Jesus will become marvellously real and living, not only to the heart but to the mind of all men.

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I can't help thinking that the name chosen was somewhat unfortunate. They called the poor little thing Millennium, with Peace-and-Plenty for a second title. So its life will be one long struggle to live up to the almost hopelessly high ambitions of its forebears. However, that has nothing to do with the story.

Amongst the guests at the christening were the usual two fairies. And after everyone had eaten as much as he or she could, after about twenty speeches had been made, all expressing exactly the same sentiments in very much the same language, the two fairies advanced to the cradle in which the little New Era lay peacefully asleep, quite unconscious of the momentous fashion in which his destinies were being settled.

EVERYONE gathered closer to hear what was said, and the guests who were unused to Court life pushed and elbowed their way to the front, so that some of the Royal Family had to clamber up on to the tables in order to catch even a glimpse of the magic wands.

But the curious thing was that the two figures standing by the cradle were exactly alike. There was not one scrap of difference to show which was benevolent and which was malicious. So all held their breath in anxiety to hear the fateful words. And some irreverent scullions on the fringes of the assembly even laid wagers on the result.

Said the first fairy waving her wand: "I give him wealth."

A GASP went up from the crowd. That was a handsome gift. What was more desirable in the world than money? A very handsome blessing indeed, was the general verdict.

But the curse was still to come. The guests gathered closer, for we are always more interested in the misfortune than in the good luck of others. Besides, the conditions of the New Era affected them all vitally.

The second fairy stepped forward, and, with a slow and graceful wave of her wand, amid a portentous silence, she pronounced these words, "When money fails, I give him sufficiency!"

THERE was a wondering silence. Then loud murmurs of dissatisfaction broke forth. What did she mean? They had expected the usual straight-forward malediction, but this was neither one thing nor the other. It couldn't be called a curse. Yet on the other hand who could call a sufficiency a blessing? Altogether a thoroughly unsatisfactory state of affairs. So the assembly broke up with great muttering and grumbling. And the scullions' bets had to be called off, as no one could say definitely which was the bad fairy.

So the New Era which was to justify its name of Millennium began to grow up. Its early days were very happy ones. The coffers were overflowing with wealth. A wish had only to be conceived to be instantly gratified. Money was splashed about with such prodigality that the very beggars at the gates came in for a share, and in the royal kennels all the dogs had new collars, and a munificent allowance of one mutton bone per day.

SO all went merrily—for a time. But one day came disaster. The New Era called for something which could not be got. In vain were all the shops patronised by royalty ransacked—all the supplies of that particular commodity were bought up, and there were no means of replacing them. Woe and lamentation was heard throughout the palace; for the New Era wept and would not be pacified. So the Royal Family and all their dependents down to the very littlest boot boy scurried to and fro trying to find something else what would satisfy his Royal Highness. And then there was made a grievous discovery. Supplies of all kinds were found to be running low. Already fabulous sums were offered for certain articles, and very soon not all the wealth in the world would serve to purchase them, for they simply wouldn't be there.

THEN the New Era discovered, as so many had done before him, that wealth is a snare and delusion, and that money becomes valueless when there is nothing to obtain in exchange for it. From every quarter of the realm men hailed the good fairy who had promised them sufficiency for the New Era, and cried out upon the witch who had cursed them with wealth and high prices. Blest and contented with sufficiency the New Era grew up into a fine child. Some day, it is the pious hope of his godparents, he may justify the name of Millennium.

ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT

Give me a girl on the night of nights,
Who will steal away from the noise and lights
To some dim-lit corner where she and I
Can escape from the crowd while the fun runs high;
Where, head on shoulder, and hand in hand,
We can drift through a lover's fairyland;
A dear enchanted vale of dreams,
Where troubles vanish and fond hope gleams;
A girl bright-eyed, and whose dainty hair
Touches my cheek as we linger there;
A girl who is sweet and who understands
The silent caress of a lover's hands,
Who is quite content in that twilight hour
To breathe the sweet fragrance of love's own flower—
Just a girl like that—never mind the "buts,"
And—you can have *all* the cigars and nuts.

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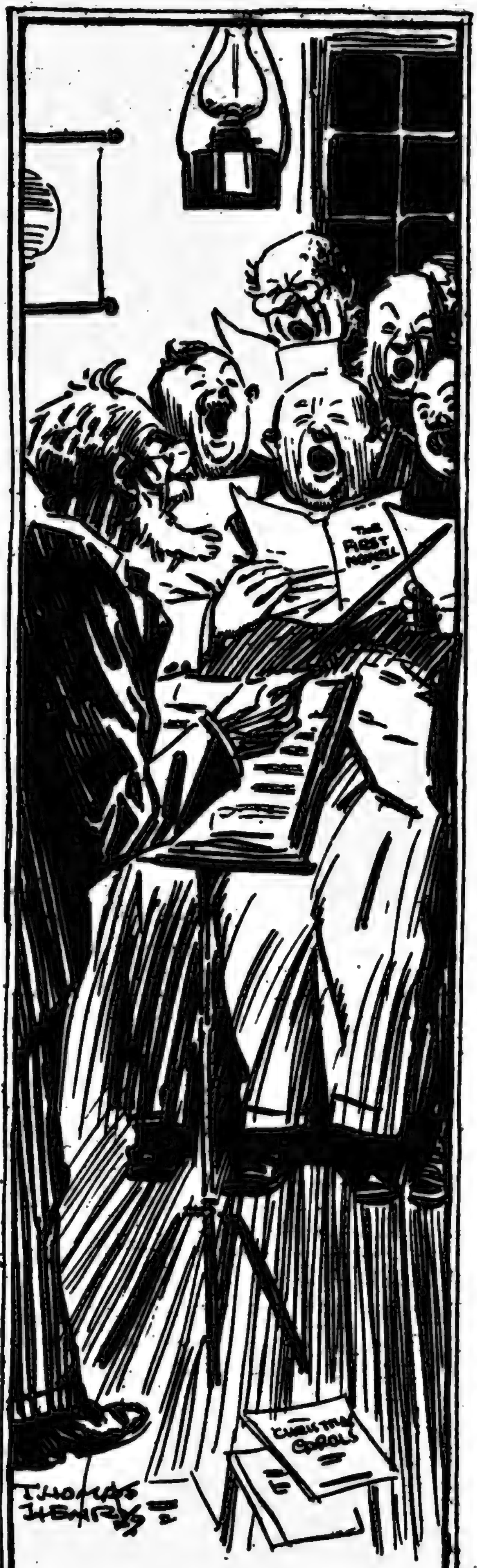

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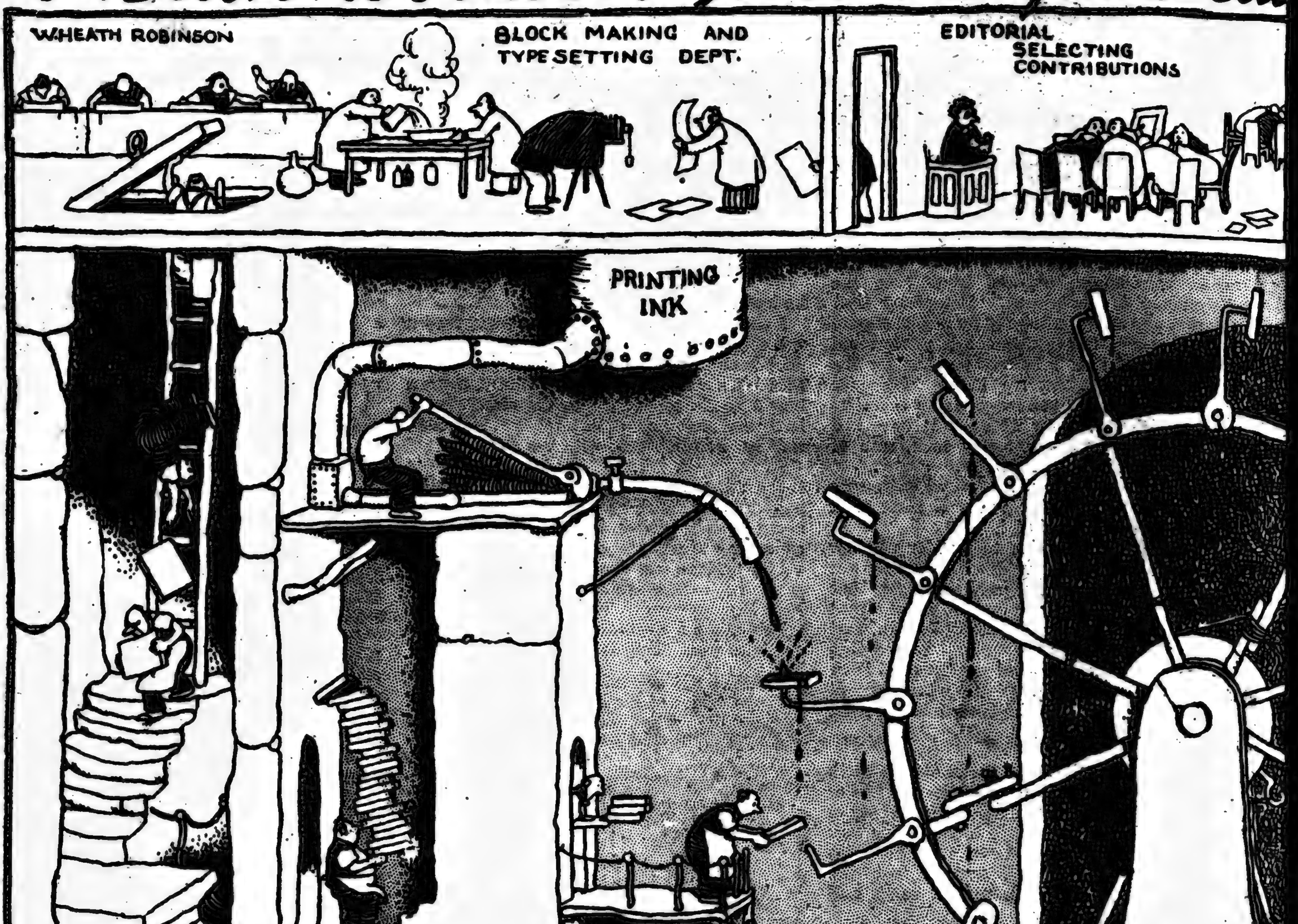
And—you can have *all* the cigars and nuts.

Heath Robinson gives the game aw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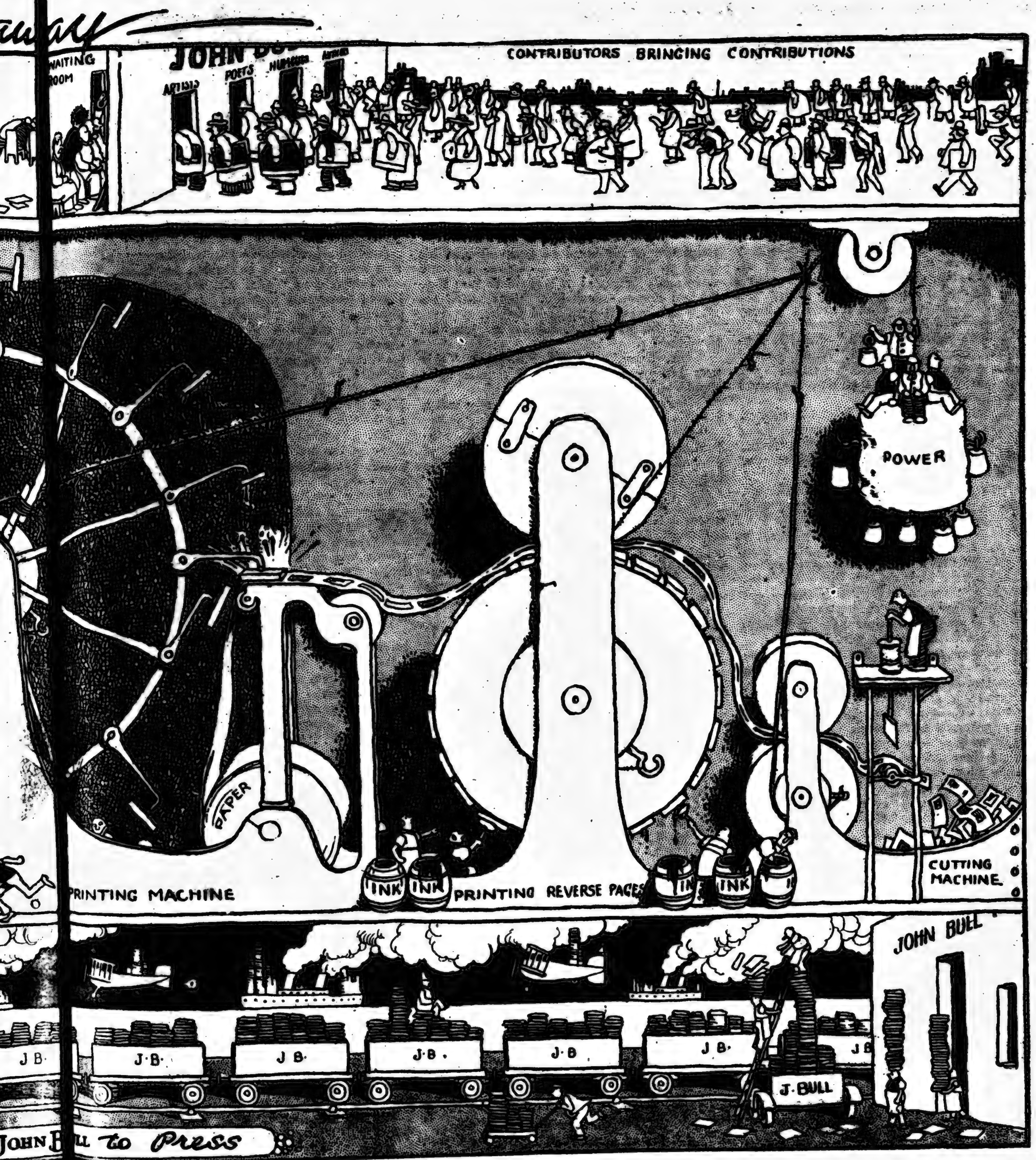
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The Man Who Caught the Christmas Spirit

"RUBBISH!" said Mr. Ottershaw fiercely. "Sentimental rubbish!" He cast the newspaper from him and glared out through the club window.

"Eh?" said Mr. Pinfeather. "Rubbish? What is?"

"This Christmas nonsense!" snapped Mr. Ottershaw. "The Christmas spirit—merry Yule—festive season—all the rest of it. Out-of-date bunkum! Who cares a—a tinker's curse for the Christmas spirit except the wine-merchants who drag it into a whisky advertisement?"

"I don't agree with you," said Mr. Pinfeather. He was a short, round, elderly citizen with a cherubic countenance, not much hair, white spats and an air of perpetual benevolence.

"I don't care if you don't!" snorted Mr. Ottershaw. "There's no such thing as a Christmas spirit! How could there be, with income-tax at six shillings in the pound? Bah!"

"Well, well," said Mr. Pinfeather pacifically, rising from his chair, "I won't argue with you, Ottershaw. You may be right."

But during his homeward journey his brow wore a corrugated look, indicating some mental disturbance. The scepticism of Mr. Ottershaw had vaguely upset Mr. Pinfeather, who was a slightly sentimental old soul with a fondness for old customs, old port and old slippers. It would be a sad thing for the country, reflected Mr. Pinfeather, if Ottershaw were right. The decay of the Christmas spirit would be nothing short of a national calamity. Not that Mr. Pinfeather, who lived a detached bachelor existence under the stern eye of an iron-willed housekeeper, was accustomed to celebrate Christmas in a riotous manner; he had few relatives and disliked them all, while his digestion was a delicate plant which rebelled fiercely at all the miscellaneous edibles which tend to make Christmas the Doctors' Annual Benefit. But, though hitherto he had been no active roysterer himself, he liked to feel that all round him other people were celebrating Christmas according to Dickens.

"But this year," said Mr. Pinfeather firmly, "I'll make a change! I'll do my bit. *I'll* show Ottershaw if the Christmas spirit is dead! I'll celebrate the festive season myself! Let me see now—what comes first? Presents, obviously. I'll give everybody a present—even Aunt Emmeline. I must make a list."

Which, as the train jolted him towards his suburban dinner-table, he proceeded to do upon the back of an envelope. Thus:

> George (brother)—Cigars. Anne (sister)—Dressing-gown (?). Henry (brother)—Pipe. Amelia (sister)—Slippers. Alfred (nephew)—Ash-tray. Aunt Emmeline—Tea-cosy. Oswald (nephew, aged fourteen)—Fretwork outfit.

"That's all, I think," said Mr. Pinfeather, regarding his list with pride. "All good, useful stuff. No flim-flammery." In the innocence of his heart he believed that his ideas on the subject of Christmas presents were really original; it seemed to him that he had chosen admirably. He reached his home in almost boyish good spirits.

After dinner he summoned to him his housekeeper.

"Mrs. Hogg," said Mr. Pinfeather, "this year I propose to celebrate Christmas as it should be celebrated."

"Your inside," said Mrs. Hogg, who was a privileged retainer, "will never stand it."

"Never mind my inside," said Mr. Pinfeather warmly. "There are other means of celebration besides over-eating. I intend to carry out all the old customs, and——"

"What customs?" said Mrs. Hogg.

"Oh—well—holly," said Mr. Pinfeather. "Mistletoe—er—punch——"

"It'll be your death," said Mrs. Hogg with conviction.

"Confound it, woman!" cried Mr. Pinfeather. "Will you kindly let me have my own way? When I need your——Hark! What is that?"

"Carols," said Mrs. Hogg wearily. "If I've turned away one lot of 'em this evening, I've turned away twenty. Nasty, bawling—"

"Carols!" said Mr. Pinfeather. In his eye appeared the gleam which betokens inspiration. "Capital! Mrs. Hogg, we will begin as we mean to go on. Kindly ask the carol-singers to step in and drink a glass of beer with me!"

MRS. HOGG recoiled as if unexpectedly requested to dance a hornpipe.

"The carol-singers!" she announced cynically a few moments later, as she stood aside to admit four small boys. Mr. Pinfeather gasped; he had not expected this. There was an uneasy silence, while Mr. Pinfeather fought frantically for something to say.

"Er—how do you do?" he said feebly.

"Nicely, thank yer," responded the carol-singers with one voice.

At this juncture the door opened again and Mrs. Hogg made another of her dramatic entries. She bore a tray whereon appeared five glasses and three bottles of beer. Mr. Pinfeather started violently.

"Don't be a fool, woman!" he whispered urgently. "Use your sense! Bring some—some lemonade!"

"There isn't any."

"Well—ginger-beer, then."

"There isn't any. And it was beer you said just now."

Mr. Pinfeather, fighting for breath, strove to speak, but no sound came. He groped in his pocket, unearthed four half-crowns, bestowed them silently upon the quartette and waved them dumbly to the door....

Bright and early after breakfast the next morning he travelled up to town, clinging stoutly to his list of Christmas presents. Entering one of those mammoth shops where one may, if one be so inclined, acquire anything from a pin to a pterodactyl, he accosted a gentleman in a frock-coat and a ducal expression and made haste to explain his needs.

"I have here," said Mr. Pinfeather, "a list of Christmas presents. As I am inexperienced in the selection of such things, I wish to leave it in your hands. Will you oblige me by selecting the best of each article mentioned and forwarding it, with my card enclosed, to the address written against it?"

"Certainly, sir," said the ducal gentleman.

Mr. Pinfeather left the shop and set a course for the club in a most contented frame of mind.

Mr. Ottershaw was seated in his usual chair in the smoking-room window and engaged, as was his custom, in hating everybody who passed.

"Ottershaw," said Mr. Pinfeather briskly, "I am giving a small party on Christmas Day. Will you do me the honour of attending it?"

"What's that?" said Mr. Ottershaw crossly, wriggling his shoulder-blades. "Party? No, dashed if I will."

"Come, come," said Mr. Pinfeather. "There will be some of that old brandy which you were once good enough to admire."

"Is that so?" said Mr. Ottershaw, brightening. "Then I don't mind if I do."

"Capital!" said Mr. Pinfeather. "Now I must go and write some invitations."

In the corner of the smoking-room he sat himself down, and for the next twenty minutes flourished a busy pen. He wrote to Brothers George and Henry; he wrote to Sisters Amelia and Anne; he wrote to nephews Alfred and Oswald; finally, feeling excessively heroic, he wrote to Aunt Emmeline.

Having lunched adequately in company with the unsociable Ottershaw, he set off briskly homewards, for it was Mrs. Hogg's afternoon out, and the one occasion in the week when Mr. Pinfeather could do as he pleased in his own house. And there was something which he desired most earnestly to do before Mrs. Hogg caught him at it.

"Punch!" said Mr. Pinfeather, hanging up his hat. "Why is a professional pugilist like a Christmas party? Because they both need punch! Ha! ha! Capital! I must tell that to Ottershaw and Aunt Emmeline."

Babbling happily to himself, he descended to the kitchen regions, whence he reappeared, staggering beneath a laden tray.

"Now, let me see," said Mr. Pinfeather. "Have I got everything? The rum, the whisky, the gin, the lemon, the cinnamon, the sugar, the cloves, the nutmeg and the water. Capital! Now we will experiment!"

Five minutes later he stood back and surveyed his handiwork admiringly.

"Now let us test it," he observed, and dipped a glass into the bowl. He drank . . .

Mrs. Hogg, returning earlier than usual from her outing, entered the dining-room all unsuspicious. Then she gave a startled cry and stood staring. The table was littered with bottles, saucepans, kettles and a dozen other aids to punch-making. Upon the sofa reposed the form of her employer. He was groaning feebly; his face was of a peculiar greenish hue; his brow was damp and his mouth open. He did not look at all well.

"Now, now," said Mrs. Hogg sternly, "what's all this?"

Mr. Pinfeather rolled a yellowish and muddy eye at her.

"Fetch—a—doctor!" he gasped. "I—think—I'm—dying. I—was—making—punch—and—this—is—what—it—did—to—me!"

Mrs. Hogg sniffed audibly and ran an expert eye over the chaos on the table. Then she uttered the short, sharp bark which was her idea of a hearty laugh.

"Dying?" she said. "Not you! Next time you play tricks with your inside, take care you don't use the old gin-bottle I keep my castor-oil in! That's all that's wrong with *you*. Now you lie still till I fetch a hot-water bottle to your feet."

It says much for Mr. Pinfeather's resolute character that he rose on Christmas morning as determined as ever to give the Christmas spirit a helping hand.

The pile of letters by his plate cheered him considerably. Virtue, he reflected, was its own reward. He fell upon them eagerly. The first was from Aunt Emmeline. It was terse and typical of that peculiar old lady.

"Dear Algernon,

"As I dislike all parties I will not come to yours. I appreciate your kindness in sending me a Christmas gift, but as I do not smoke, and probably never shall, you will forgive me if I hand on your ash-tray to the butler.

"Your affectionate Aunt,
"EMMELINE BYTHEWAY."

Mr. Pinfeather laid the letter down. He did not in the least understand what Aunt Emmeline was talking about, but attributed it to the old lady's eccentricity. Ash-tray, forsooth! He took up the next letter.

Presently he leaned back in his chair in a dazed manner. He felt completely and entirely at a loss. The letters were all from relatives, and each epistle was couched in the same tone. Brother Henry wrote sarcastically to point out that he had but small use for a lady's red flannel dressing-gown. Sister Anne drew attention to the fact that cigars to the number of fifty made no appeal to her. Sister Amelia aired similar sentiments concerning the pipe which dear Algernon had so generously sent. Nephew Alfred, while grateful for a pair of Number Two feminine bedroom slippers, regretted that they accorded ill with a Number Ten masculine foot. Nephew Oswald, thanking Uncle Agernon for the knitted tea-cosy, expressed regret that he would not be allowed to use it at school. Nevertheless, one and all made it plain that the prospect of a free meal would ensure their presence at Mr. Pinfeather's party.

Dumbly Mr. Pinfeather drew from his pocket the list of gifts which he had compiled and which the ducal gentleman had returned to him with the bill on the previous day. Then he gave a startled yelp. He perceived that in tearing the back from the envelope he had torn off also the name of Brother George; Mr. Pinfeather's train-shaken handwriting accounted for the rest. The ducal gentleman, working painstakingly down the list, had therefore sent cigars to Anne, the dressing-gown to Henry, and so to the melancholy end. Who, wondered Mr. Pinfeather dismally, had got the fretwork outfit?

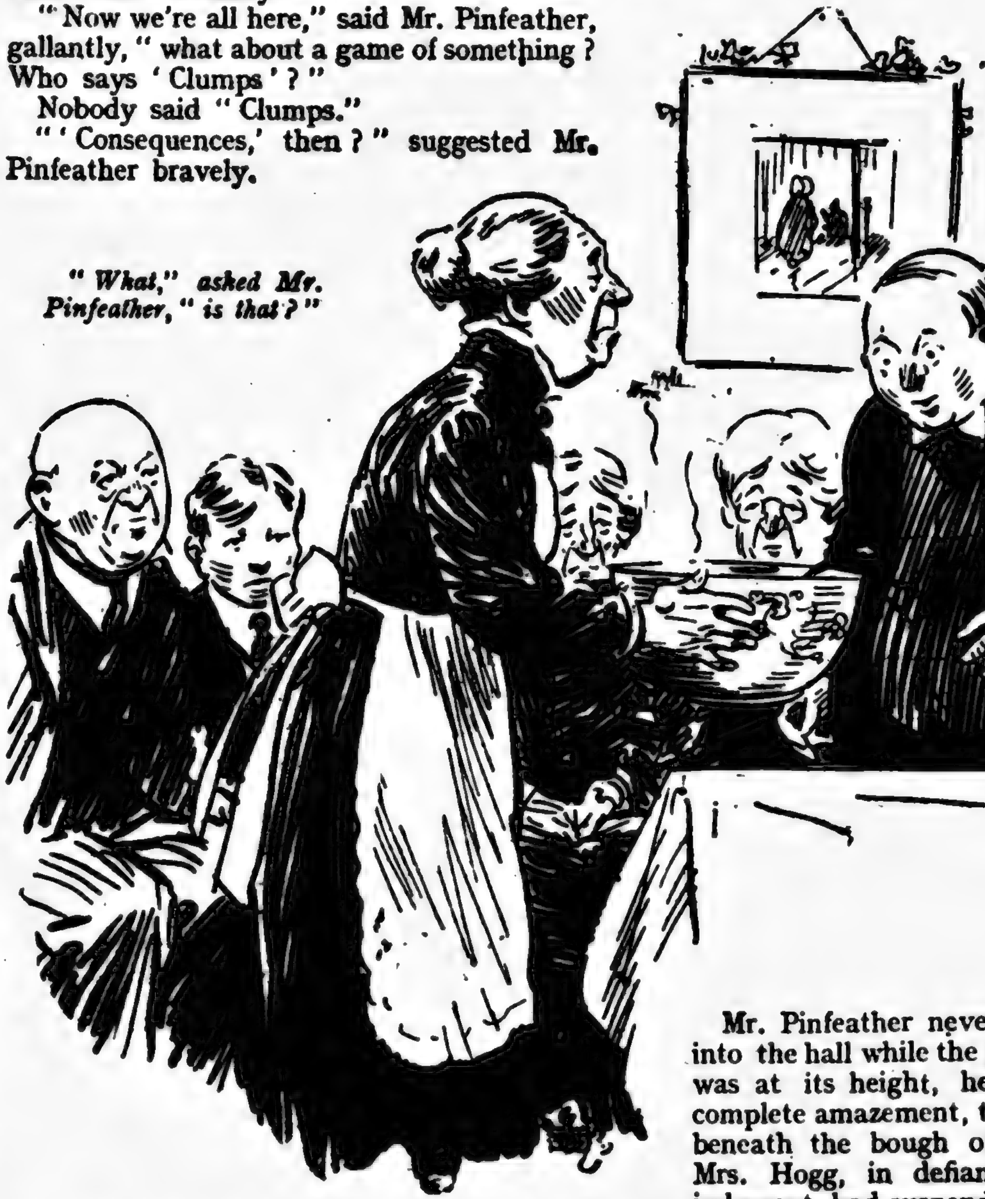
Let us leave Mr. Pinfeather to recover during the ensuing few hours and come at once to four o'clock of the afternoon, at which hour the arrival of Mr. Ottershaw, grey-spatted and morose, inaugurated Mr. Pinfeather's party. Mr. Pinfeather himself, more or less recovered from the shock of the morning, did his conversational best, but Mr. Ottershaw failed to respond. Mr. Ottershaw, having come on account of the old brandy, saw no reason for small talk or chit-chat

Thereafter, at intervals of about fifteen minutes, there arrived Brother George, Brother Henry, Sisters Amelia and Anne, Nephew Alfred and—very late, and looking as if he had already eaten far too much—Nephew Oswald. These Mr. Pinfeather disposed about the drawing-room, where they sat staring glumly at one another, as is the habit of large families whose members hate each other cordially.

"Now we're all here," said Mr. Pinfeather, gallantly, "what about a game of something? Who says 'Clumps'?"

Nobody said "Clumps."

"'Consequences,' then?" suggested Mr. Pinfeather bravely.


"What," asked Mr. Pinfeather, "is that?"

"What's he chattering about?" demanded Sister Anne, who was extremely deaf and had forgotten her ear-trumpet. No one enlightened her, and there followed a heavy silence, broken only by Nephew Oswald, who had produced from his trouser pocket a bag of sweets and was making up for lost time. Mr. Pinfeather, gazing round the assembly, began to wish for an earthquake, a thunderbolt—anything to wake these people up. He was on the point of uttering a hysterical scream when the door opened abruptly and admitted Mrs. Hogg.

In her hands the housekeeper bore an immense bowl, which she deposited carefully upon the table.

"What," asked Mr. Pinfeather, "is that?"

"Seeing that you're all sitting round as mumchance as a lot of mutes at an undertaker's funeral," said Mrs. Hogg haughtily, "I thought as how a drop of punch—*real* punch—might liven you up a bit." She withdrew in good order.

"What's that?" said Mr. Ottershaw, Brother Henry, Brother George and Nephew Alfred, rising as one man. "Punch?"

Mr. Pinfeather heaved a sigh of heartfelt thanksgiving. Instinct told him that henceforward his party would need no artificial respiration. Mentally he added a pound or two to Mrs. Hogg's wages.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Pinfeather's party is still a subject for conversation in the family circle. All his relatives are agreed that, while Algernon has very few genuine brains, he certainly knows how to entertain. And who can forget that merry fellow, Mr. Ottershaw?

Mr. Pinfeather never will. Emerging into the hall while the punch-born gaiety was at its height, he observed, to his complete amazement, two figures lurking beneath the bough of mistletoe which Mrs. Hogg, in defiance of her better judgment, had suspended from the lamp.

"Ah-ha!" cried Mr. Ottershaw, with no trace of shame. "There you are, Pinfeather, old buck!" He approached and whispered loudly in Mr. Pinfeather's ear. "Splendid girl, your sister Amelia, old boy! At a time like this it's up to all of us to be merry and bright, what?"

The spirit of Christmas had come into its own.

Harrison Owen takes us for— A NIGHT IN TOPHET

> *THE Impertinent Interviewer thinks it must have been the Plum Pudding, for it couldn't have been the Wine.*

THE Impertinent Interviewer screwed his monocle into his eye. "Pardon me, old crumpet," he remarked to the stranger, "but I feel sure we've met before."

"My card," said the other, holding out a metal disc. Bertie took the disc, but dropped it hastily, for the metal was red hot.

"What the devil—— ?" he began.

"That's me!" was the sardonic reply. "I'm accustomed to being addressed as 'Your Majesty,' but I always read your 'Impertinent Interviews' and you seem an old friend, so call me Lucifer."

"Right-oh," agreed the Interviewer; "but where the deuce am I? This place is as hot as hell."

"That's not altogether surprising, my dear Bertie—it *is* hell!"

Bertie passed a hand across his eyes. "I don't remember playing the star part in a funeral," he murmured.

"You're not dead," the Devil assured him; "merely down here on a Yuletide visit; so you may as well have a look round. Here, put these on—you'll need 'em."

He thrust a pair of asbestos slippers toward Bertie, who fitted them on like goloshes. The two then passed into a corridor many degrees hotter. Almost immediately Bertie's eyeglass cracked and fell in fragments.

The Devil threw open a huge brass door, and a wild medley of sounds assailed their ears. A dozen jazz bands seemed to be performing simultaneously, and above the blare of brass and banging of cymbals came peals of laughter and bursts of song.

They were in a hall like a West End restaurant. Gay parties sat at tables, some revellers in fancy dress were doing the Camel Walk, and on a platform a couple of exhibition dancers were demonstrating what his guide informed Bertie was the Devil's Dip.

The Impertinent Interviewer turned his attention to the waiters, who were all drab, glum-visaged persons. When the head waiter came down the room Bertie at once recognised him.

"Good night, Councillor Chadband," he remarked cheerily, "this is better than the Midnight Follies, eh?"

"Oh! Mr. Bull," wailed the head waiter, "it is terrible, horrible! They call this den of infamy the Brighter Tophet Restaurant. It never closes. Week after week, month after month, I and my noble associates, who on earth bore aloft the banner of social reform, have to wait on these abandoned wretches and serve them with intoxicating liquor long after 9 o'clock. What could be a worse fate for me—I, who when a member of the L.C.C., endeavoured to force hotels and theatres to close at 8 o'clock?"

"You mustn't expect sympathy from me, Chadband," Bertie told him; "you did your best to make London a dead city, and now—I say, though, who's your funny little friend doing the Shimmy Shake in bathing costume?"

"Alas! my poor brother Stiggins. Don't you remember his magnificent fight against mixed bathing at Slocum-on-Sludge and his campaign against dancing? He was allowed to choose between doing the Shimmy Shake twice nightly in this vile place or spending 127 years bathing with members of Lucifer's harem in the Lake of Fire."

"Hi, waiter, more champagne!" came a cry from one of the tables. Bursting into tears, ex-Councillor Chadband hurried away.

Bertie was about to ask one of the Sheol Beauty Ballet for a dance when Lucifer, linking a friendly arm in his, led him to the Salon of Swank. This was filled with a strange mixture of people—beauty actors and actresses, wild and tame poets and painters, several once eminent judges (dressed as clowns or jesters, but easily recognisable), and a number of persons wearing coronets, on each of which was a label setting forth the price paid for it.

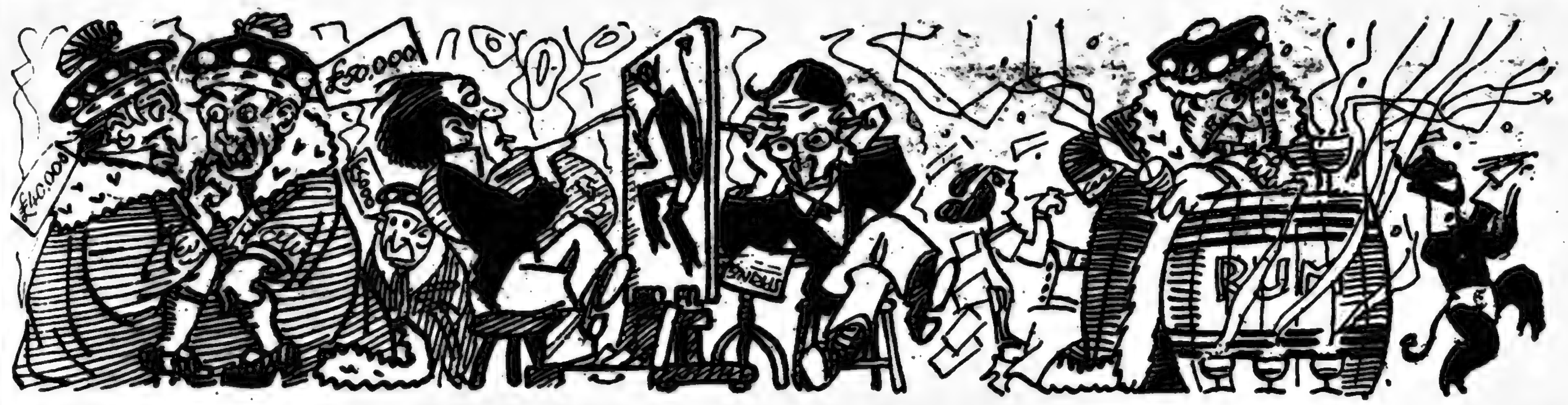
Bertie approached one of the Swankhards, whose coronet was set at a disconsolate angle and whose expression was one of intense dejection.

"Lord Lumme!" exclaimed Bertie.

"You got my name wrong, young man," replied the other; "it ain't Lord Lumme, but Viscount Rummy of Rumhaven."

"Ah, yes, I remember now," murmured Bertie; "I was never clear about why you were elevated to the beerage—er—I mean the peerage. Your coronet, I see, is marked '£40,000'?"

"Yes, but it didn't come out of my pocket," Viscount Rummy informed him with a confidential wink. "You see, I 'ad a contrak for supplying rum to the troops in the war that was fought to put an end to the second of the wars that were fought to end war, an' when I got ther tip that the Wee Conservative-Liberal Party was short of funds, an' disposin' of a job lot of coronets at forty thou each, I said to



meself, said I: ''Erbert, this is where you come in.' I thought of them pore fellows out in ther trenches, many of 'oom 'ad left respectable 'omes that 'ad never known even ther smell of liquor, an' I decided that I would not be ther one to set any of 'em on ther road to drunkenness. So I got busy an' diluted ther rum I was supplying until there was no kick left in it—it was as 'armless as milk, an' cost less—cost ME less, that is, but it cost ther War Office the original contrak price, an' I saved forty thou. on ther deal."

Bertie could think of no suitable reply. The Devil, who was standing beside him, chuckled delightedly. "I have always been amused," remarked Lucifer, "by the anxiety of some of the wealthy lower orders to possess coronets. Our friend here knew he could never hope to become a gentleman, but it was quite easy for him to become a nobleman."

At this moment one of the Devil's disciples appeared and grabbed Viscount Rummy of Rumhaven by the scruff of the neck and the slacks. "Come on, 'Erbert," he exclaimed, "it's time for your rum ration."

"We're giving him a dose of his own medicine," explained Lucifer, as the Viscount, shrieking incoherent protests, was rushed from the salon. "We've got a few thousand casks of his alleged rum down here, and he's forcibly fed with a couple of gallons three times a day. The treatment is to be continued for 999 years, by which time the noble Viscount will probably conclude that kind hearts are more than coronets and simple faith than doctored rum. I must ask you to excuse me while I go and see that the treatment is properly carried out."

Lucifer slipped away and Bertie wandered about the salon until, in one corner, he came to a table at which sat Miss Flossie Footlights with whose picture postcard he had fallen violently in love at the age of ten. She was scribbling in a frenzy—testimonials for face cream, tooth powders, hair dyes, fireproof corsets, ladderless hose and sundries—especially sundries. Piles of testimonials she had already written were heaped before her.

"My sweet girl," murmured Bertie, "you'll get writer's cramp."

"I can't help it," she replied hysterically, "I've got to keep on. I've written 1,786,542 of these things without seeing one in print. The papers here are censored before I see them. I haven't seen a picture of myself since I came here, though I've written millions of testimonials, and I pay to have my jewels stolen every Tuesday and Friday. It's just hell!"

"So I believe," murmured Bertie. "But are all the girls down here actresses?"

"Good lord, no! Some have never even been photographed in a punt!"

"Here we are again!" exclaimed a voice behind him. Bertie turned and saw a man in the costume of a Court Fool, whom he recognised as Justice Dearest.

"I want you to answer a question," said his lordship in a confidential voice: "I've asked 77,865 people down here and none of them can tell me—who IS Gladys Cooper?"

Bertie groaned. "Here, take me away Lucifer!" he pleaded, thankful to find his host again at his elbow.

"Come and have a look at the Party Politicians," said the Devil. "They're strange birds; they think they're the most important people down here, whereas they're merely the most numerous."

The noise in the Brighter Tophet Restaurant was nothing compared with the horrible cacophony in the Gehenna Debating Chamber. Party politicians of every size and vintage were talking at the top of their voices, while above the din came a sound that set Bertie's teeth on edge—the sound of grinding axes. Every man had an axe to grind, just as he had on earth, but with this difference—the axes were white hot.

The man who had once been Bertie's member immediately started to harangue him: "Mr. Bull, sir, I have been treated in a disgracefully shabby manner. Why should I be kept here? What did I ever do when I was on earth?"

"You did the War Office for a good many thousands over that cotton waste contract," replied Bertie promptly.

"Mr. Bull, you do me an injustice. I always did my country—er—I mean my duty, faithfully and well. Did I ever fail to vote as directed by the Party Whips? When the unemployed and the ex-Service men asked for pledges, what did I do? I gave 'em."

"Did you ever keep them by accident?" inquired the Interviewer.

"What has that got to do with it?" inquired the other querulously; "I was a politician, not a pawnbroker. And now I'm kept at this loathsome job of grinding axes; because that Fiend behind you says it's the only work I'm fitted for."

"One must give the Devil his due, don't-cherknow," Bertie told him, "and in this case I fancy he's about right."

"Thanks, I thought you'd agree with me," said Lucifer. "Now come and have a look at the Profiteers."

After passing down many flights of steps into the very bowels of Gehenna, they reached a great room lined with blazing furnaces and crowded with men who were dancing on the red-hot floor in bare feet.

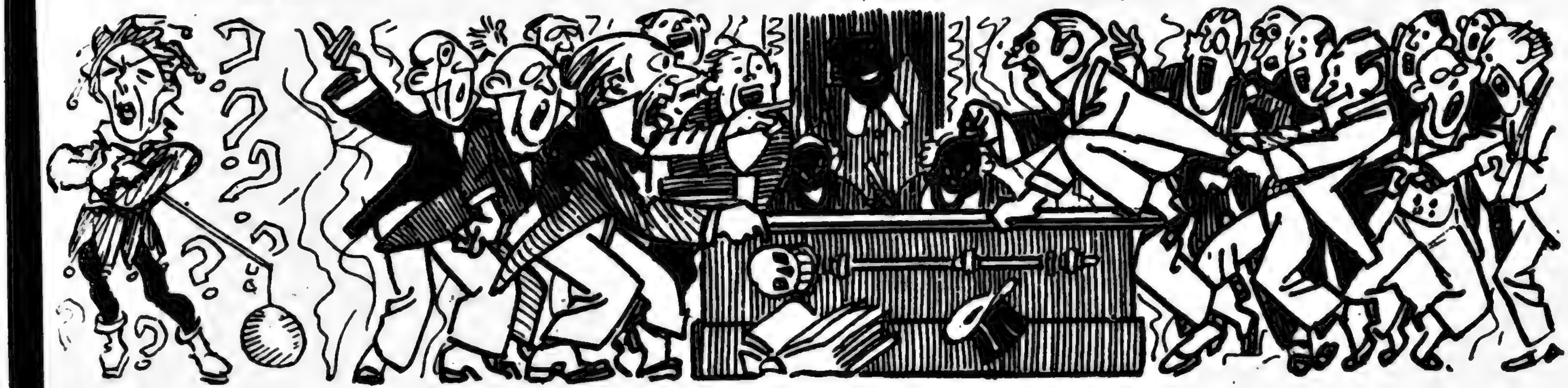
"So you're a jolly old profiteer?" observed Bertie to one.

"Profiteer?" exclaimed the other. "Me 'oo never did nothing worse than rob a couple o' orphanages an' kick an ole woman to death! Wot do th' like o' you wanter come down 'ere insultin' respectable people for? Take that, curse you!"

Before Lucifer could intervene, the indignant criminal had shot out a straight left which caught Bertie on the forehead. Stars danced before his eyes. . . .

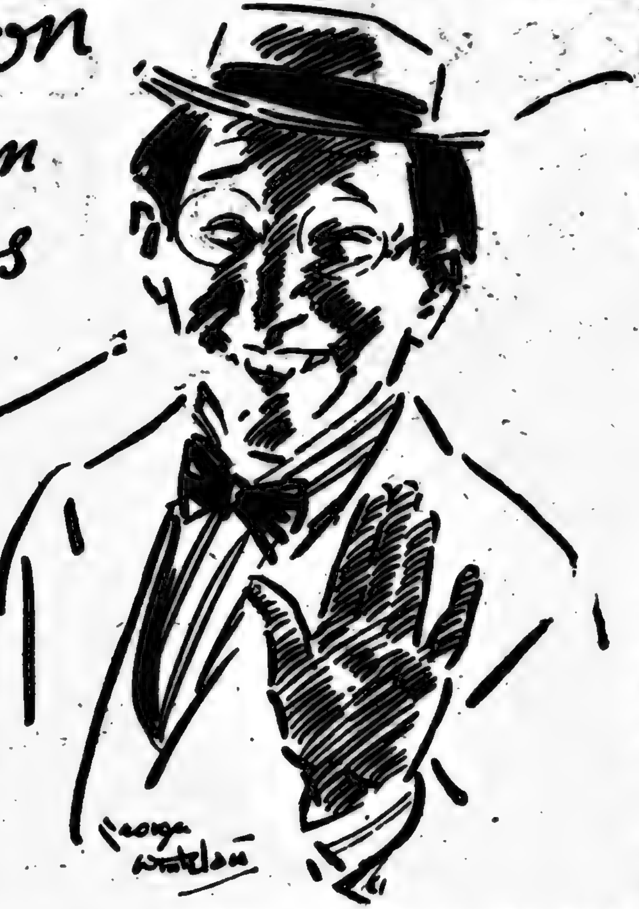
* * * * *

BERTIE awoke to find himself beneath an untidy heap of bedclothes. His left temple had received a nasty knock and the picture which usually hung above his bed was lying beside him with the glass broken.



Cousin Cyrus Gets His

A. A. Thompson brings him from U.S.A. & shows how



It was Christmas Eve with the Harrises in Hampstead. Don't misunderstand me. I would not suggest for worlds that Christmas is a phenomenon which happens only to the Harrises, or even only in Hampstead. Not at all. Christmas happens just as much to the Smiths at Surbiton, the Browns at Bootle, and Robinsons at Rotherhithe. Christmas happens everywhere. It even happens in America. How do I know? Because the Harrises' Cousin Cyrus said so, and the Harrises' Cousin Cyrus (from Gahd's Own Country and don't you forget it, buddy), was a great man. A very great man.

Indeed, the greatness of their Cousin Cyrus is my only excuse for dragging the Harrises in at all, for who wants to hear about Harrises? Very commonplace folk, the Harrises. Oh, quite. Mr. Harris? Quite an ordinary husband and father, who buried himself in a City office every day and grumbled continually (but ever so mildly) at the Government, the Income Tax, and the weather. Mrs. Harris? Quite an ordinary wife and mother, mainly occupied in making the housekeeping money spin out further than one would have believed possible. Mr. Jack Harris? Quite an ordinary young man, pretty smart at his job, and a sound half-back, but nothing really out of the way. Miss Betty Harris? Neat, pretty, and jolly good at tennis; but then, there were dozens of pretty girls in Hampstead just as neat and just as good at tennis. Master Bobby Harris? Bright-eyed, inky-collared, and the most mischievous little ruffian in his school, except, of course, for the other four hundred and ninety-nine other little ruffians at the same scholastic establishment. Nothing remarkable about any of the Harrises, you say. Nothing at all.

But they had a Cousin Cyrus, and Cousin Cyrus was a wonderful being, from the top of his Stetson hat to the broad toes of his brogues. A very great man; and you had no excuse for not knowing it, for if you didn't recognise the fact at once he'd jolly soon tell you. There was no false modesty about Cyrus, and, on the other hand, there was no snobbishness either. Why, hadn't he condescended to come all the way from America to give this little old island a look-up, and wasn't he actually going to spend Christmas with these commonplace relatives of his? He had no grudge against poor, doddering old England. His attitude towards her from the first was one of profoundest pity.

"Gee!" he exclaimed, as he jumped from the train at Euston, "how you can stick living in this one-cent, poky, sleepy hole of a country beats me stiff. England's been plumb asleep since William P. Conqueror's time. Yes, sir. It's all to the Rip Van Winkle. Wants a bunch of ginger hitting into it one-time."

"Do you think so?" asked Mr. Harris mildly, advancing along the platform, and taking his nephew's "grip."

"Sure I do," breezed Cyrus. "The country's all wrong. No zip. No pep. No bim. It's got more cobwebs on it than Van Camp has beans."

They stepped out into the dusky main road and boarded a 68 bus.

"Look at your methods of transport," continued Cyrus as they sat down. "Look at this one-horse contraption we're crawling along in. Might have come out of Noah's blessed ark. We wouldn't stand for it in the States. No, sir. Every gink's got his own auto there. Why, sir, even a hobo there wouldn't go his rounds without some sort of motor-buggy."

A kindly welcome greeted the visitor when the front door of the villa opened and the rest of the Harris family came out into the hall to wish him a merry Christmas.

"Yes," said Cyrus, "I guess I'll be all right here, not that I reckon it'll be any blinding flash, checked up with some of the Christmases I've seen in the States. You've got no notion of doing things on a big scale here. When we Americans get busy on a thing, we get busy big."

"I know we can't do things on a large scale," smiled Aunt Harris modestly, "but we'll do our best. We have a little holly——".

"Holly!" laughed Cyrus. "You ought to have seen the holly we had at Yonkers in 1911. Some holly! Prickles that would have run you through like bayonets, and berries! Why, one of the kids nearly poisoned himself eating those berries, figuring they were blood oranges."

"And we've some mistletoe, too," said Betty Harris, blushing, "perhaps——"

"Mistletoe!" cried Cyrus scornfully. "Call that pesky little bunch of green stuff mistletoe? Why, in Milwaukee in 1912 we hitched a hunk of mistletoe, big as an oak tree, to the main girder in the City Hall, with two thousand of the peachiest girls standing in regiments underneath. And I kissed the whole bunch of them. Hullygee, I did so."

"And we've got a topping turkey for to-morrow," put in Bobby eagerly. "I'll bet it's the best turkey you've ever seen, Cousin Cyrus."

"I guess not, son," drawled Cyrus; "I sure guess not; not unless it weighs two fifty pounds and looks like an ostrich, same as the turkeys we had down in Oshkosh ten years ago. Gee, that was a Christmas! I saw those birds in the farmyard before they killed 'em off—big as emus and fierce as lions. Dodgast me if I didn't see one of 'em bite a nigger's arm plumb off when he went to feed it. There was no wringing those birds' necks. The boys used to ride after 'em on bronchos and shoot 'em."

The Harris family was lost in admiration. "But come," said Aunt Harris, "won't you sit down and have some supper? You must be tired after your long journey from Liverpool."

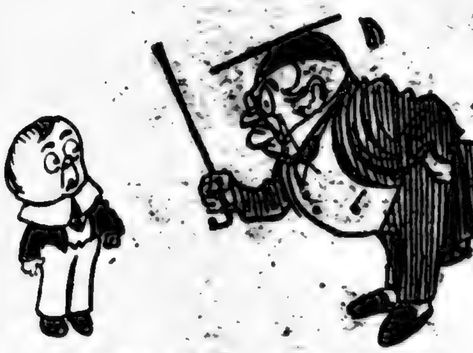
Cyrus slouched over to the best dining-room chair.

"Long journey, Aunt Harris?" he grinned. "Dog my cats if you haven't got some plumb crazy ideas. Liverpool to London a long journey! You should see our railroad expresses—they'd eat up the distance like it was a slice of melon. And let me tell you, those expresses are the genu-ine goods, not like your trains, that haven't got beyond the Pharaoh's one-wheel chariot stage yet. Our Pullmans are just Waldorf-Astorias on wheels. When I travelled from Pittsburg to Buffalo last fall, I recollect I . . ."

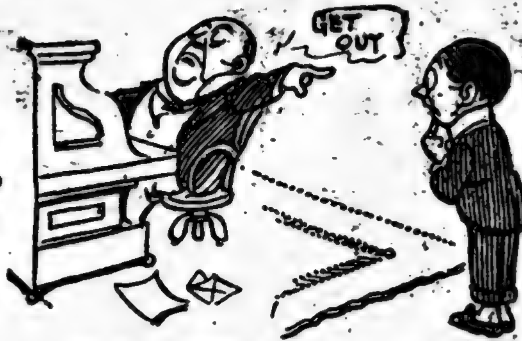
And so on through supper. The Harrises listened in stunned wonder to the verbal Niagara that poured from Cousin Cyrus's lips. Truly he was a great man. Truly they were ordinary people. England was a very, very ordinary country, whereas at everything from baseball to baking buckwheat cakes, America had it licked to a frazzle. And as for the keeping of Christmas, there was only one country in it. Yes, sir. America was the sure-enough, topside, royal-flush, crackerjack country, and don't-you-forget-it. And to do Cousin Cyrus justice, from supper till bed-time, he gave the Harrises no opportunity of forgetting it.

Christmas morning dawned bright and clear, with snow on the ground and a crisp

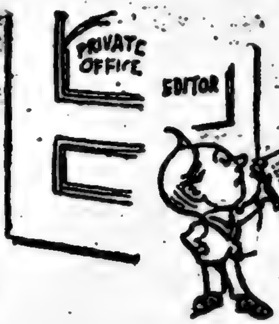
THE LUCKY NIGHTMARE



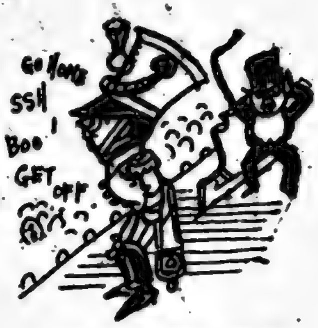
At school Browne was a dismal failure.



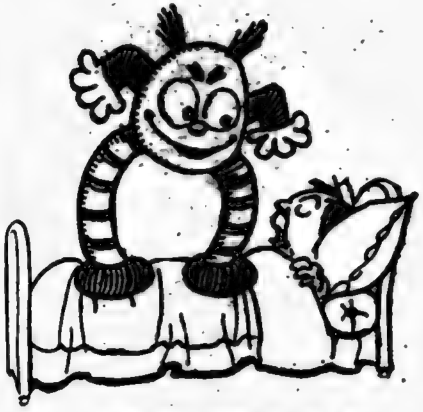
And in commerce later on he was far from a success.


PRIVATE OFFICE
EDITOR

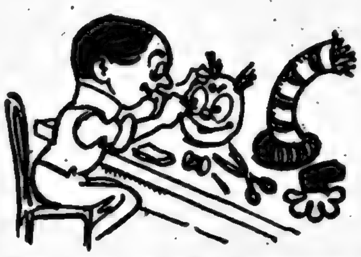
He tried Literature.


GO HOME
SSH!
BOO
GET OFF

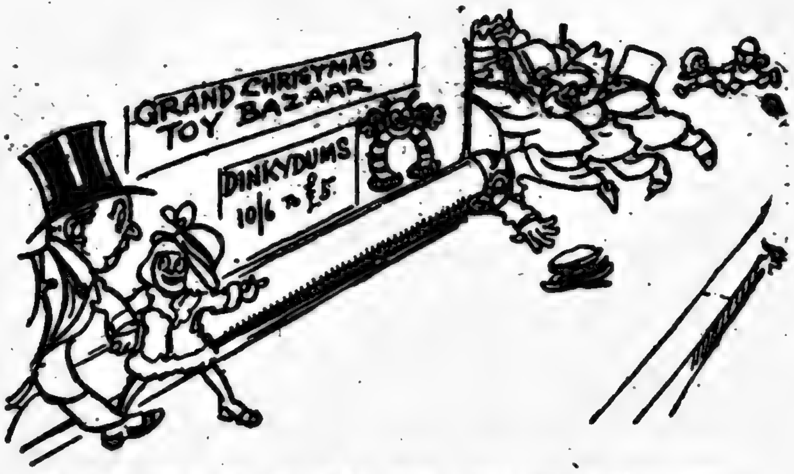
And the drama, with the same results.



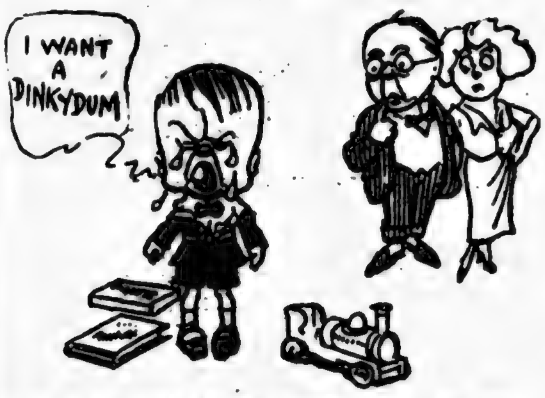
But a nightmare changed his luck.



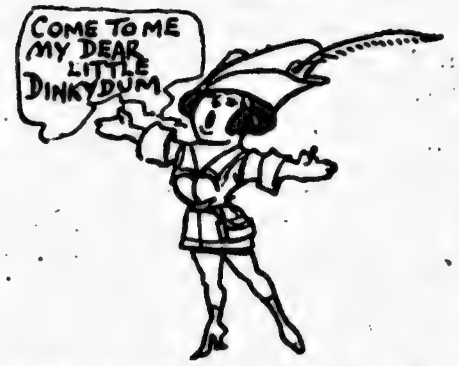
For he set about adapting it to practical uses.


GRAND CHRISTMAS TOY BAZAAR
DINKYDUMS 10/6 to £5

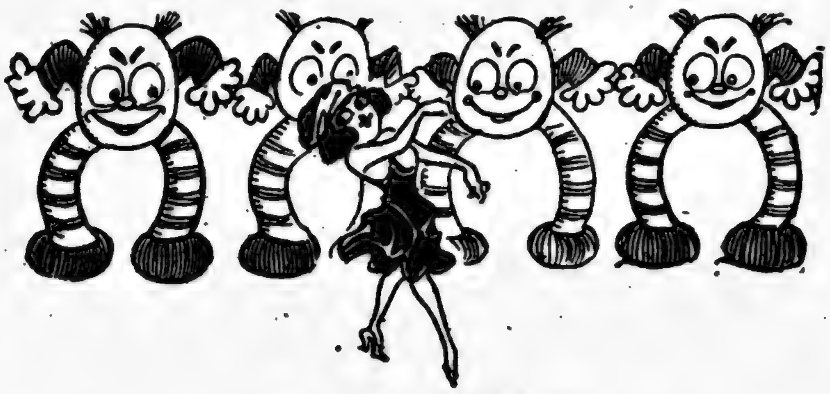
Everyone knows how the public made a mad rush for Dinkydums.


I WANT A DINKYDUM

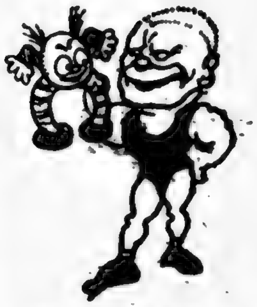
And every kiddie in the kingdom cried for one.


COME TO ME MY DEAR LITTLE DINKYDUM

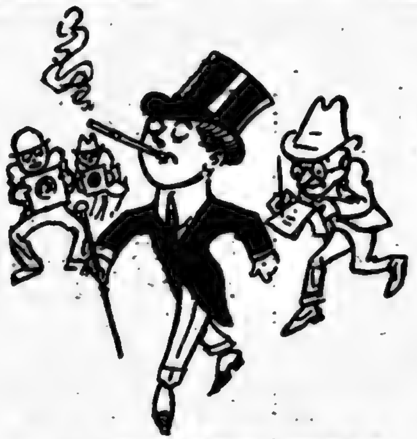
It suggested the big panto song of the season.



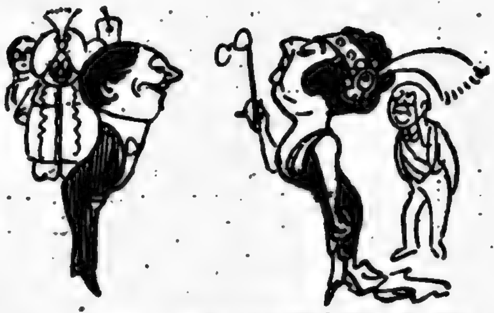
And a chorus in the latest revue.



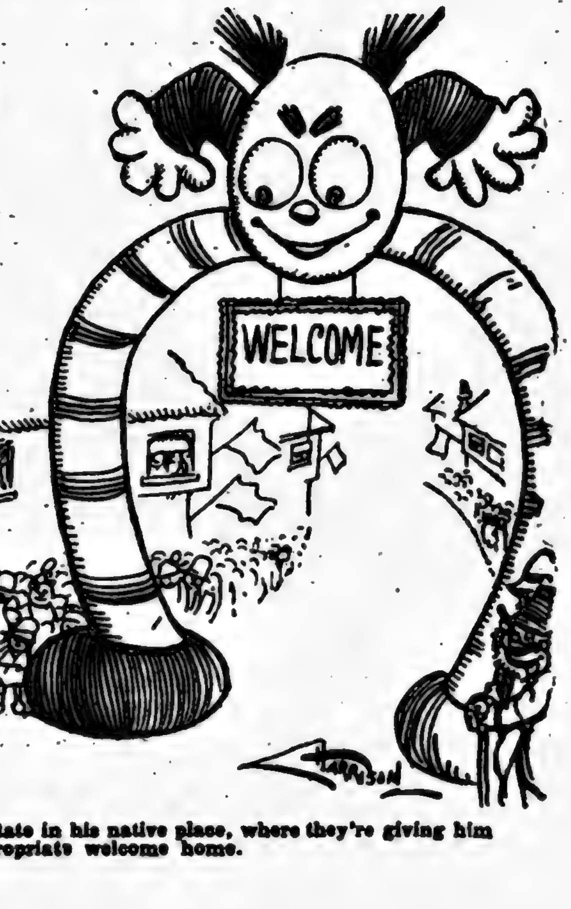
An eminent heavyweight secured one as a mascot.



So one morning Browne woke up to find himself famous.



And a duchess at her reception complimented him on his happy inspiration.


WELCOME
HARRISON

Amassing a huge fortune, he has bought an estate in his native place, where they're giving him a right royal and appropriate welcome home.

Charles Harrison's Story of the Dinkydum Toy

tang in the air. Outside the church bells pealed merrily and a distant band of street-musicians called cheerfully on Christians to awake. The injunction was unnecessary for the Christians were already awake. The family was at breakfast and Cousin Cyrus was saluting the happy morn with his mouthfull of bacon and eggs.

"It's a cold morning," said Mr. Harris, warming his hands at the coffee-pot," but I love these cold mornings. They're so brisk and ——."

"Say," drawled Cyrus, "were you passing the word about cold? I guess you've got no more idee about cold than an Eskimo has about electric fans. Now I've spent a Christmas in Dawson City and I calculate I savvy what cold is. Why, sir, your shaving water turned into a solid brick the minute you hiked it off the fire. There were icicles inside the stove. It was no uncommon thing for a guy's nose to drop off with frost-bite when he turned down his coat collar to wipe it. Dod-blame me if I didn't go about for three weeks with a walking-stick made of a gallon of milk."

"There's been a lot of snow during the night," essayed Jack. "I shouldn't wonder if ——."

COUSIN Cyrus seized the marmalade-jar and laughed loud and long.

"Snow!" he chuckled. "Do you call that two inches of cotton-wool on the sidewalk by the name of snow? Gee, boy, if you want to see snow you should put in a Christmas out West. I've known it come down for six weeks without quitting—flakes big as pears. Yes, siree. The snow was that deep you had to climb a forty rung ladder up the shack-chimney to get out to the store. Don't talk to me about snow."

"Still it's quite cold for England," ventured Betty; "there's sure to be skating on the ponds. Do you skate, Cyrus?"

"Do I skate? Well, ask me. Ring me up in the night and ask me. When the Great Salt Lake was frozen a foot thick I skated two hundred miles without easing down once. You've never seen skating in England. And figure skating! Well, say, have you seen the Yukon Twist?"

"No," replied Betty humbly, "is it clever?"

"Oh, it's as easy as pie to a real skater. It's just a set of figure eights done backwards on one skate. It's the first thing you learn in my country. Any kid there could do it blindfold. I'll show you after breakfast."

"Oh, thanks, that'll be splendid," chorused the younger Harrises.

HALF an hour later Betty, Jack, Bobby and the great man were tramping briskly along towards the ponds, the crisp snow crunching beneath their feet. Skates were put on by the pond-edge, Cyrus expatiating on the glories of the Yukon Twist all the time. A uniformed park-keeper approached the group.

"Morning gents, and a Merry Christmas," he said brightly. "There's good skating for everybody if you keep at this end, but I wouldn't go over by the far side by the willows. The ice is pretty thin there."

"Oh, shucks!" retorted Cyrus. "What in thunder does it matter? I've skated on thinner ice in Gahd's Own Country. It's slickness that counts—William P. Slickness of Clever County . . . Come on, boys!"

And Cyrus swept into the centre of the main pond, the others following swiftly. The ordinary joys of swift movement through the frosty air had no charms for Cyrus. Plain skating might be good enough for England, but it wasn't good enough for him. He was going to teach them all manner of wonderful figures—the Californian Cartwheel, the Nevada Nose-dive, the Dixie Dip, and, above all, the marvellous Yukon Twist.

"YOU just watch me," commanded Cyrus; "it's that slick you gotta watch it pretty closely, or you won't see. I guess you've never hit anything like it before." And following the intricate evolutions of the Yukon Twist he sped backwards away from them, whizzing and whirling straight for the willow-shaded corner. There was an ominous sound of cracking. Jack and Bobby started forward. More cracking. Then a sharp noise rang out like a pistol shot, and Cousin Cyrus disappeared from view. The Harrises (as I may have mentioned) were very ordinary people, but they were not without a certain rough and ready competence in an emergency. In two seconds Bobby was kneeling by the crack, hanging on to Cyrus's hair like grim death, and Jack, swinging like a cat from a stout, low willow-branch, was holding out a strong and helping hand. The business was all over in a moment, and Cyrus stood dripping and shivering, on the bank.

"What awfully bad luck," cried Betty, running up. "But never mind. I've got a taxi, and we'll have you home in no time. Here he is."

Bobby regarded the drenched figure as it was bundled into the taxi. He had an overwhelming desire to remark: "Well, Cousin Cyrus, is our water as wet as your water in America?" But he did not say it. Bobby was human, but he was an English sportsman, too.

BON-BON MOTTOES

What happens when an irresistible woman meets an immovable man? Ah! she never does.

* * *

Marriages may be made in heaven, but there's nothing like a mother for getting the goods on the market.

* * *

Planets and comets that have been named after some of our great men probably don't brag about it up there.

* * *

Cheer up—it's all luck. Nelson would never have been heard of if it wasn't for the battle of Trafalgar.

* * *

For all the millionaires say, it's better to be cursed with money than—without it.

* * *

The married man's argument — Why worry? It's all in a wifetime.

* * *

What a lot of real happiness there would be in the world if girls would only develop cold feet before marriage instead of afterwards.

* * *

A husband in the hand is worth two breach of promise actions in the courts.

* * *

A peach of a girl may possess the heart of a peach—which is a very stony stone.

* * *

Man is the only machine man does not know how to use properly.

* * *

There is a whole heap of difference between being constant in love and constantly in love.

* * *

CYRUS sat down to his Christmas dinner, muffled in several thicknesses of dressing-gown, and none the worse for his ducking. In came the turkey. No doubt it was a very ordinary bird, but Cyrus tucked into it placidly and, curiously enough, hardly once stopped to compare it with the man-eating turkeys of Oshkosh. The plum pudding with it's flaming halo of burning brandy was just the same commonplace kind of pudding as the odd million other puddings that were being eaten all over England at the same moment, but Cousin Cyrus had two helpings and scarcely said a word. You might have expected him to have waxed eloquent about the pudding he had eaten in Pittsburg in 1913 (which was as big as a push-ball and required fourteen Chinese cooks to carry it), but somehow or other he never mentioned the matter. Gradually, imperceptibly, something was happening to Cyrus. He cracked English nuts, he pulled English crackers, from which he abstracted and wore an absurd English paper cap. He kissed Aunt Harris seven times under the English mistletoe. He very nearly tried to dance the Sir Roger de Coverley the most English thing in the world—all on his own. What was the matter with Cousin Cyrus?

UNCLE Harris was standing at the sideboard, stirring vigorously at a huge bowl from which arose a delicious steamy cloud.

"Cyrus, my boy," cried Uncle Harris, "a glass of punch!"

"Sure thing, Unk," replied Cyrus, in curiously subdued tones.

Round went the glasses. Round went the steaming bowl. Cyrus, toying with his tumbler, looked round on five jolly beaming faces.

"Say, folk," he said quietly, "I want to talk to you all right here. You've sure gotta listen to me. I got frozen stiff this morning in that dod-blamed creek, and you thawed me. You thawed me outside, and gosh-darn it if you didn't thaw me inside as well. I came here stiff with swank, flim-flamming to beat the band, and you never hit back once. You just loaded me down with turkey and kindness and mince-pies and ace-high generosity. I was a sure skunk."

"Not at all," said the Harris family in a body.

"Sure I was, and, in return, you handed me the greatest thing on this little old planet an English Christmas. It's not the holly or the puddings or the snapdragon or the punch that gets me. It's—durn it all, it's the spirit of the thing."

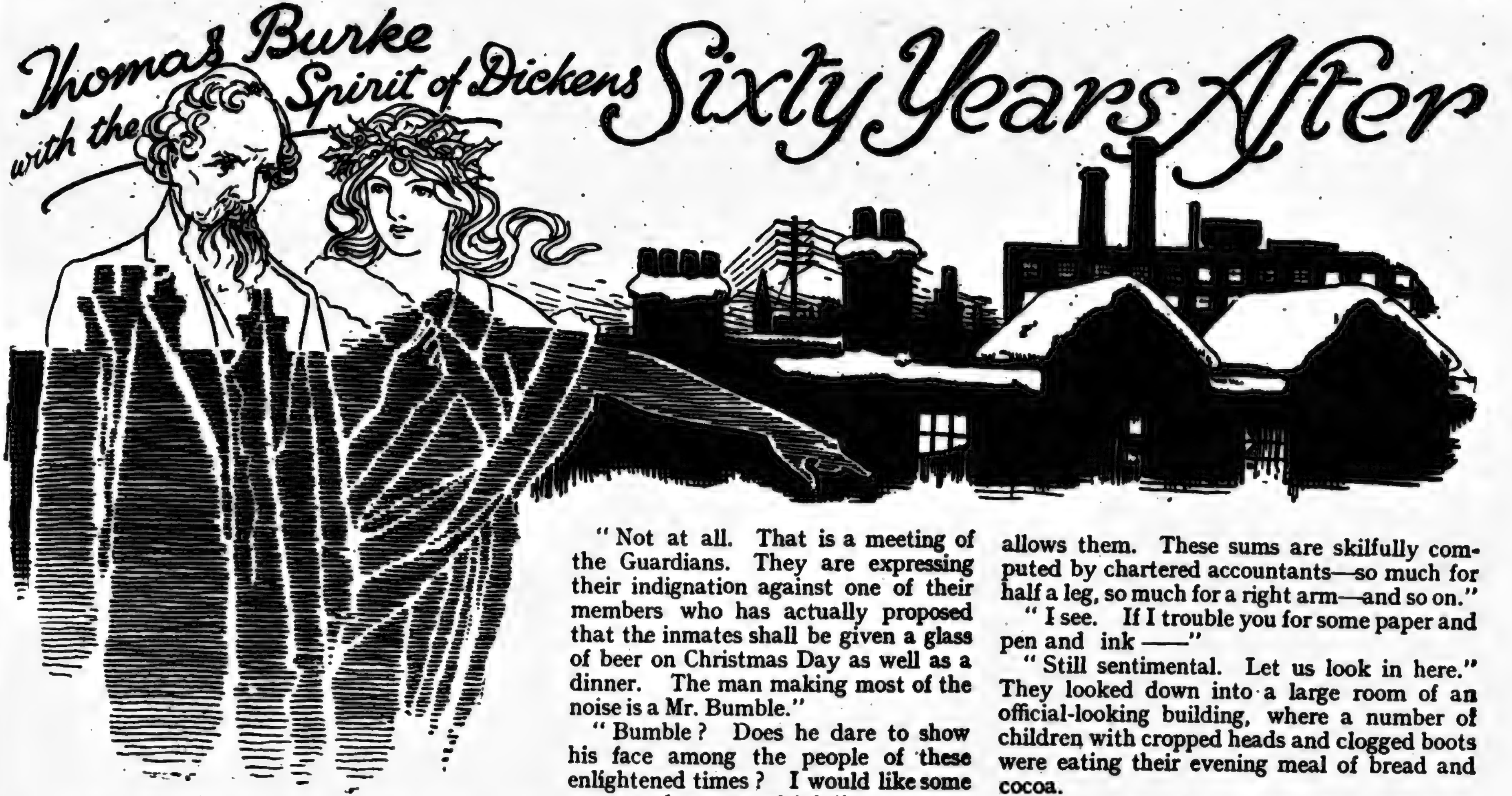
"Then," said Betty, sweetly but slyly, "you don't think that *all* the biggest things come from America?"

"Only one," answered Cyrus; "the biggest boob, the biggest bonehead, the biggest, battiest, doughheadedest mutt ever."

"And who's that?" asked Bobby, puzzled.

"Little George Washington Me," said Cousin Cyrus earnestly, "little old me up to yesterday; but not now, by jiminy. It's an English Christmas for mine, and if I ever say different, well, put me under the ice again one time!"

Thomas Burke with the Spirit of Dickens Sixty Years After



GUIDED by the Spirit of Christmas Past and Christmas Present, the ghost of Charles Dickens went abroad on Christmas Eve.

"You will find many changes," said the Time-Spirit. "Many changes. Old things have passed and new things have arisen. The condition of the people has changed largely."

"I am glad. They are happier now? There is less suffering, less poverty, less——"

"I said the condition had changed. I did not say it had improved. But you will see for yourself. Look!" They hovered over a large gaunt building of grey stone.

"I seem to remember this place. It is——"

"Yes, it is a prison. That is the condemned cell into which you are looking."

"They still hang their malefactors, then?"

"Yes, but they are more humane than they were in your day. They no longer hang in public. They found, after what you had said about it, that the scene was too much for the sensibilities of the public feeling. So they do it behind closed doors, and they flog their prisoners behind closed doors. But never in Christmas week. As I say, they are humaner to-day. Let us pass on. Here is another example of their humanity."

"That building just below us? But it looks much like the one we have just left. Is it another prison."

"Nonsense. That is a Workhouse—a home of refuge for men and women who are useless for further work. Instead of killing them off, the authorities support them at the public expense in these large airy buildings. And at Christmas time they give them a real Christmas dinner, just as though they had earned it."

"Wonderful benevolence! But what is that noise coming from the room with the green-baize table. Is that the old people in rebellion?"

"Not at all. That is a meeting of the Guardians. They are expressing their indignation against one of their members who has actually proposed that the inmates shall be given a glass of beer on Christmas Day as well as a dinner. The man making most of the noise is a Mr. Bumble."

"Bumble? Does he dare to show his face among the people of these enlightened times? I would like some paper and a pen and ink."

But the Spirit led him on until they came above a barracks of red brick, from which came the screaming of a child.

"What terrible sound is that disturbing this happy evening? Some child in pain or sickness."

"Pain, I think," said the Spirit. "That place is a reformatory, and one of the pauper-boys is being reformed by a director of the institution named Squeers."

"Squeers? I thought I demolished Squeers many years ago. Is he still allowed to practise his savagery on children? Is he——"

"You are getting sentimental," said the Spirit. "But for Mr. Squeers and his institutions, that boy might now be running the streets and enjoying himself instead of being knocked into a useful citizen. Let us pass on."

THEY passed on till they came to the outer ring of the city, and in a lighted street of the district a queue of men stood outside an imposing building.

"Who are these men?"

"They are the men who fought for freedom and their country's honour five years ago."

"But they look tired and cold and miserable and hungry. Why are they waiting out in the rain?"

"They are waiting to draw their Doles."

"Doles?"

"Yes That is the name given to certain sums of money which their grateful country allows them. These sums are skilfully computed by chartered accountants—so much for half a leg, so much for a right arm—and so on."

FINE FEATHERS

The kingfisher's breast is a blaze of delight
And the parrakeet's colours are fine,
The humming bird's feathers are gorgeously bright
While the Paradise birds are divine.
The peacock has plumage beyond all compare,
Which he sports in his varying moods,
You may mention a hundred more, equally rare,
But—the old hen delivers the goods!

"I see. If I trouble you for some paper and pen and ink——"

"Still sentimental. Let us look in here." They looked down into a large room of an official-looking building, where a number of children with cropped heads and clogged boots were eating their evening meal of bread and cocoa.

"What a truly extraordinary spectacle. What have these children done? Is this another reformatory?"

"Not at all. This is a charity home erected by kind-hearted people for the orphan children of the slums. Here you see the Christmas spirit, for which you pleaded in your 'Christmas Carol,' in evidence."

"Take me away. Take me away. Have you nothing to show me of the new spirit of which I have heard? I was told that the late war had cleansed men's hearts and that everywhere was a spirit of consideration and tolerance. Can you show me nothing of this?"

The Spirit paused. "Let me see, now . . . Ah, yes . . . Come . . . See, here is an up-to-date factory. Look carefully."

"Ah, this indeed is gratifying. Bright clean workshops. A piano for dinner-hour concerts. And a swimming-bath. A gymnasium. A sports ground. A welfare department. A dining-room. A rest-room. Who are these men who spend so much upon their servants? Are they the new race, putting self and gain on one side for the greatest happiness of all?"

"Hardly new," said the Spirit drily. "They are just business men."

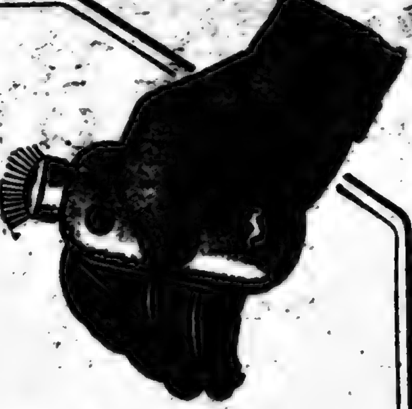
"Business men? Then the new spirit has manifested itself where one would have least sought it. What is the reason for this change of spirit?"

"Business," said the Spirit, more drily. "In two words—It Pays. By treating their workmen as sportsmen treat their race-horses, they get more work out of them."

"Enough, enough! I will see no more. It is clear that things are as they were. Bumble still here. Squeers still here Chadband still here. The kill-joy Stiggins still here. I thought I had helped to kill them long ago."

The Spirit sighed; then smiled grimly. "Ah, you forgot one thing. You made these tyrants comic figures. You forgot that they were Englishmen, and that ridicule never kills Englishmen. It only advertises them . . ."

A Useful Xmas Gift



THE first important consideration in purchasing a Xmas Gift is usefulness—something that will be of use every day, and a constant reminder of the giver. Be sure your gift fulfils these requirements by giving

The "GUINEA"
SELF-GENERATING POCKET LAMP

Every man and boy desires a pocket lamp, and women too, for it has a 101 uses around the house these dark Winter nights—but it must be the best—a "GUINEA" Self-Generating and inexhaustible; this wonderful lamp gives a strong, steady, never-failing light.

All the bother of re-fills, all danger of failing light are eliminated—features that appeal to everyone. The "Guinea" is operated by a lever which drives a small dynamo, and costs nothing for maintenance. The case is made of aluminium, and is quite light and convenient for the pocket. Always ready for use, always reliable.

NO BATTERY — INEXHAUSTIBLE

PRICE 21/- *A six months' guarantee with each Lamp*

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Planted and managed for you by this Company, without any trouble on your part. We guarantee to plant each five acre plot with 500 selected healthy and vigorous trees. The Company accepts full responsibility for the interests of the absentee owners.

Part of the famous Letaba Estates situated in the Transvaal "Home of the Orange." These have been cut into five acre lots, and there are a few left. Price, £625 payable in five years at the rate of £125 per year.

in South Africa

You will receive freehold title at the end of five years. After that time, the Company, if desired, will continue the management for you. The initial price covers planting and cultivation for the first five years.

An orange grove of five acres will give an income of £500 per year, when in full bearing. This is the estimate of South Africa orange growers and is confirmed by Government statistics.

and have a permanent income

Booklets, photographs, certified figures and facts will be gladly sent to any *bona fide* enquirer on request. Remember that our claims are confirmed by expert and impartial testimony.

This land is reported on by Government experts as suitable for orange growing and under permanent irrigation. The value is continually increasing.

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McKenzie
1¾ h.p. Lightweight MOTOR CYCLE

is the cheapest reliable motor cycle on the market to-day. It weighs only 75 lbs., is fitted with Fellows Magneto, Heavy ¾ in. Driving Belt, Clincher Motor Cycle Tyres (26 in. × 2 in.), with Head and Tail Lamps Separate Acetylene, Generators and Tubing, Horn, License-Holder, Number Plate, Carrier, Tool-Bag, Tools, Inflator and Clips Complete for the Road.

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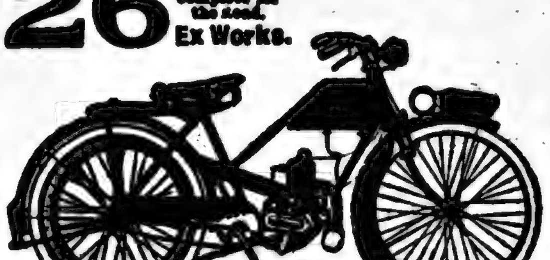
"They copied all they could follow,
But they couldn't copy my mind,
And I left 'em sweating and stealing
A YEAR AND A HALF BEHIND."
KIPLING.

26 GNS. Complete for the Road. Ex Works.



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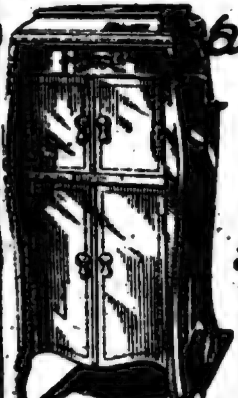

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of handsome appearance, standing 3 ft. 6 in. high, beautifully finished throughout, fitted with a British Double Spring Motor (plays 3 records with 1 winding), and contains the latest improvements of 1922, ready for immediate playing. Honestly worth £15 15s.

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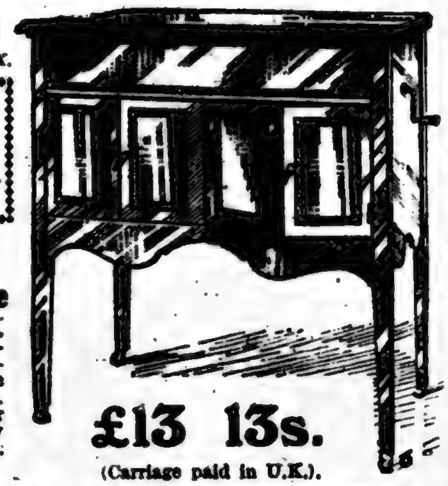

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Seamark's Adventures with The Ghost that Did

THE firelight played brightly in the bar-parlour of the lonely little country inn. The whole room glowed warm and cosy with the comfort of Christmas. Hollyberries shone red in the lamplight of the old oak beams; evergreen festoons hung in generous array round the dark waiscotting, and a big log-fire crackled in the open hearth. A pair of fat York hams swung in the smoke under the chimney corner; the windows were tight-shuttered against the winter gales that were streaming across the dark countryside. Outside the night was pitch black, heavy with the driving rainstorms gushing down on the wind.

"A bad night," said the innkeeper to the two travellers who sat with their feet outstretched to the blaze.

Micky Muldoon, from County Mayo, sipped hot toddy from a pewter mug and emphatically agreed. "To be out on the road on a night like this, wid a perishin' Saxon, takes arl the pleasure out av Christmas," he averred. He shot a sly glance at his travelling companion. "And as though that's not enough to affright a man, ye must needs tell me there's a haunt in my room!"

The innkeeper coughed deprecatingly. "'Tis only idle talk, I'm sure, Sir," he said reassuringly. "Such commercial gentlemen as yourselves declare they've had troublous nights in the gabled room. A headless man they say it is, Sir, but I doubt not 'tis only idle talk. Just their sleepy fancy, Sir; shadows on the walls from the tall trees by the windows and, maybe, an old rat or two under the floorings."

Muldoon snorted. "Away wid ye!" he said in fine derision. "Ye're trying to scare me wid your hints of ghosts. *I'll* not be scared wid your blarney. There's never a ghost in England wad keep a Muldoon from his rightful slumber. Be jabers! I don't believe 'twas ghosts they saw at all, at all. 'Twas imps from the poisonous whisky ye sell here that gave 'em all the green shadders in the night. That's what they saw—whisky imps. Sure, I've seen 'em meself, afther a supper at the poteen tub; skyblue devils wid three rows of white eyes, and only wan tail between the crowd of 'em. Aye! and a rale Donnybrook Fair they kick up before they settle which wan of 'em is going to wear it."

Bob Harwood, the "Saxon," opened his eyes wide with simulated surprise. "Holy Moses," he said, "here's an Irishman whose not afraid of ghosts!"

"No more I am!" snapped Micky, drawing hard at his pipe.

THE Englishman grinned. He wagged an admonitory forefinger at Muldoon. "That sort of talk is all very well—down here in the bar, Micky," he said. "But you'll find it's a different matter when you're up there in the haunted room, somewhere round about midnight, when all is quiet as the grave. If a mouse squeaked you'd be calling on all the Saints of Hibernia to deliver you. You wait and see, my son. You'll find it one thing sitting down here talking about them, but quite another when you are up there lying in bed, waiting for them! You'll be scared all right, you see!"

"The divil I will!" retorted Micky, flaring up. "I'm an Irishman, bedad, and I'll not be scared of your ould English ghosts—bad copies of the real thing that they are! There's never a ghost in all England wad scare a Mayo Muldoon. 'Tis meself as says it!"

Harwood winked at the landlord. He knew Micky's thoroughly superstitious temperament. "I'll bet you a fiver you are dead scared by the morning," he said, "and scared of an English ghost at that."

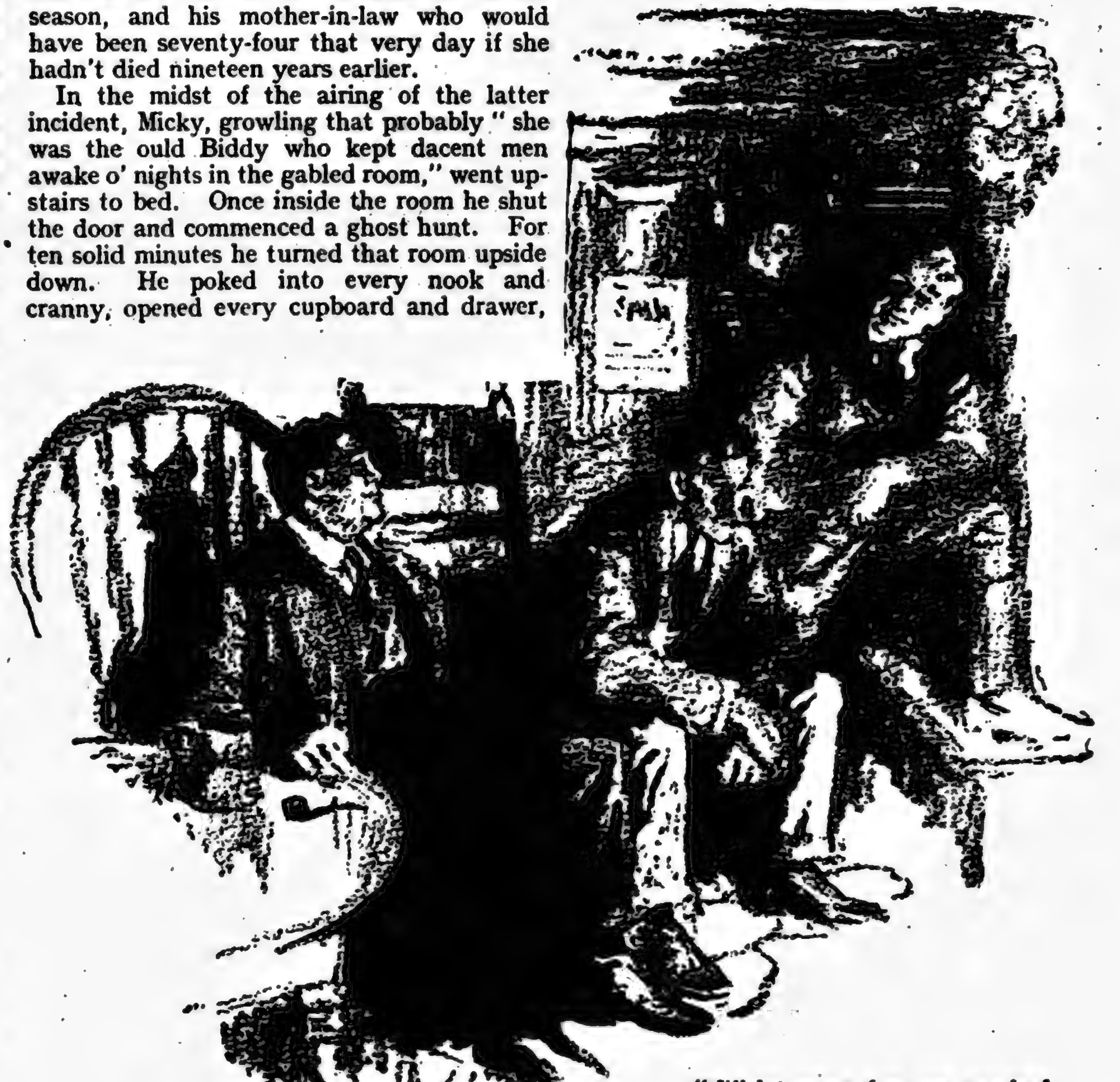
Micky's eyes glittered. "I'll bet ye, Ochone!" he said grimly, and whanged his pot down on the bar.

THE innkeeper was called upon to take temporary stewardship of two crinkly five-pound notes. Having settled the matter, Boniface did his utmost to switch the talk round to less touchy subjects. He discussed the gale, the paucity of the winter crops, the long pull, the tit-bits of scandal in the village, the cow that calved three months out of the season, and his mother-in-law who would have been seventy-four that very day if she hadn't died nineteen years earlier.

In the midst of the airing of the latter incident, Micky, growling that probably "she was the ould Biddy who kept dacent men awake o' nights in the gabled room," went upstairs to bed. Once inside the room he shut the door and commenced a ghost hunt. For ten solid minutes he turned that room upside down. He poked into every nook and cranny, opened every cupboard and drawer, ransacked the tall, gloomy-looking wardrobe, peered up the chimney, and finally crawled right under the huge bed and out at the other side.

His final opinion and verdict on the matter was contained in a single pithy sentence: "T' hell wid the ghost," he said and blew out the candle.

NOW that candle stood on the washstand, and that washstand stood, very naturally, against the window. And that window looked out on to the stable yard. His blowing out of the candle emphasised a hundredfold the gloom in the room, but at the same time it lessened the darkness outside. Muldoon took a last final peep at the rain-washed night. The gale was still driving along in wild, sweeping squalls; sullen battalions of black cloudwrack piling up into the night blotted out the moon. A broken gutter-pipe dropped a steady stream of water which splashed noisily on the cobbles of the stable yard below. He was in the act of turning away,



"I'll bet you a fiver you are dead scared by the morning," Harwood said, "and scared of an English ghost at that."

when a faint glimmer of light in one of the stables on the other side of the yard caught his eye. He stood for a moment and watched it, ruminating on its origin. Probably a stable hand having a last look round at the horses before going to bed; or perhaps the landlord himself seeing that all was safe and snug before locking up for the night. Then the light flickered and grew a little brighter; it came through the stable door and out into the yard. And Micky Muldoon saw what he saw and chuckled.

For the light was a stable lanthorn, tastefully draped round with various odds and ends into the semblance of a human head, and the bearer of the lanthorn was Bob Harwood. Over his arm were several lengths of chain taken from the heavy cart-horse harness, and on his shoulder was a white, rolled-up hay sheet. Harwood crossed over the cobbles and entered the inn door. Muldoon heard the latch click and, with a seraphic smile on his face, turned into bed to dream of old-time Christmases down in County Mayo.

AT one o'clock in the morning it happened. All was still and silent as the grave except for the splash of rainwater outside. Suddenly the door opened. It opened silently, without visible cause, and a fearful shuffling sound entered the room—a shadow that *rustled*. Slowly it dragged across the floor. At the foot of the bed it halted. A thud of falling chains and a piercing shriek struck into the startled night. The Thing vanished as Micky shot bolt upright in bed.

"Where are ye, y' addle-headed swab ye?" he demanded.

For answer a despairing moan floated through the room, and a wraith-like apparition slid out of the great wardrobe in the corner. An icy chilliness swept across the air. The apparition had bright, staring eyes and thin bloodless lips. Its hands were splayed fingers of clicking bone, and there was a fearful-looking wound encircling its neck. For a tense moment the only sound in the room was the wash of rain on the mullioned windows and the splash of the stream from the broken gutter-pipe. The wraith rattled its chains and moaned again. It began to move towards him.

Micky grabbed a pillow. "If ye come wan step nearer, I'll baste the breakfast out av ye," he said emphatically. "I admit 'tis a foine bit av work ye've done wid the stuff at yer disposal, Bob, but at the same time I don't like the looks of ye. There's a creepy, crawly look about ye."

The apparition paused, its eyes fixed on him in a rigid deathlike stare.

"Aye! ye'd better pause an' all," warned Micky, "for if ye dare to move wan more step my way, I'll flatten ye agin that wardrobe!"

The apparition opened its mouth and displayed two rows of long white teeth set in fleshless jaw-bones. "Listen!" it said, in a voice that was brimming over with horror. "One hundred years ago to-night I was foully done to death in this very room."

"Stop your blarney. 'Tis long enough ago for ye to have forgotten all about it. Ava! Ye memory wouldn't last that long. An' besides—'tis no use tellin' me *thim* sort of tales, Misther Ghost—I'm a commercial thraveller meself, I am!"

The sepulchral voice was inexorable. "In that very bed I was murdered!"

"Be jabers, Bob, yer makin' a rare fuss about ye're paltry five-pound note," Micky grumbled. "But 'tis my bed now and I've paid for it. Away wid ye!"

The apparition took off its head and held it out, all stark and staring, towards him. Muldoon took another grip on the pillow. "None of them games now," he yelled; "ye'll be dhroppin' the dadblamed lanthorn and settin' the house afire. Put it down or I'll be afther giving ye a swipe in the stummick—whither ye're got wan or not."

The ghost tucked the head under its arm. "Oh, merciless infinity, is there no justice?" it wailed. The words, cold with the clamminess of age-old tombs, actually came from the white lips and clicking teeth under the arm.

Micky sat back on his heels in amazement. "Now how the blazin' Banshee did ye do that?" he gasped. "Eh? How did ye talk out av yer armpit?"

"On that very bed, O earthbound human, my head was hacked from my body!"

"Then I'm afther hopin' they've changed the beddin' since then, begobs! It's a messy business, cuttin' off heads on tick beds."

The bony hands replaced the head. "I want justice!" it moaned.

"And I want a couple of five-pound notes," retorted Micky. "Now go away and turn in. I can't be bothered wid ye any longer. Sure, Bob, it's a bletherin' fool of yourself ye're makin'." Muldoon climbed back into bed, straightened out his pillow and drew the bedclothes up to his chin.

The apparition gazed at him in utter stupefaction for one awful horror-filled minute, and then the silence of the night was shattered by its last despairing shriek, a sound that vibrated on the shocked silence like the cry of a dying soul drifting down to the darkness.

In five minutes Micky Muldoon had got back to County Mayo.

BONIFACE woke him in the morning with a cup of tea plus something that does its own advertising. Muldoon drank it and demanded his winnings from the landlord.

"With pleasure, sir, and I hope you've had a pleasant night," smiled Boniface, "but first hadn't I better acquaint Mr. Harwood?"

"As ye plaze, as ye plaze. I'll come wid ye," and Micky marched into Harwood's room.

He shook him out of his slumbers unceremoniously. "I'll be afther wishin' ye a merry Christmas, and I want ten pounds off ye!" greeted Micky.

Harwood sat up and blinked. "Oh! ah, um, yes," he said sleepily. He gazed blankly around him for a minute. "Um, ah, yes, I suppose you do. But you got off light though, you blighter. I had a grand haunt fixed up here for you, but, like a great lumbering fool, I went clean off to sleep and forgot all about it. Couldn't keep my wretched eyes open. I waited for about half an——"

"Wha-a-a-t?" blurted Micky.

"Oh, that's right enough. There's all the gear down there behind the door, stable lanthorn and all."

"D'ye mean—d'ye mean ye niver came into my room last night?" asked Muldoon in a thin whisper.

"Went clean off to sleep and never woke up all the dratted night. Gee! I'd have scared the murder out of you if——"

Micky's hands and eye-lids were trembling piteously. "And are ye sure ye niver spoke to me, Bob?" he asked imploringly, "niver tried to come in and pull me leg; niver sphoke to me out av ye're armpit? Ah, now! Bobbie, me darlint, don't go telling me 'twas a real poor ghost I waz insultin' half the night? Don't tell me 'twas——"

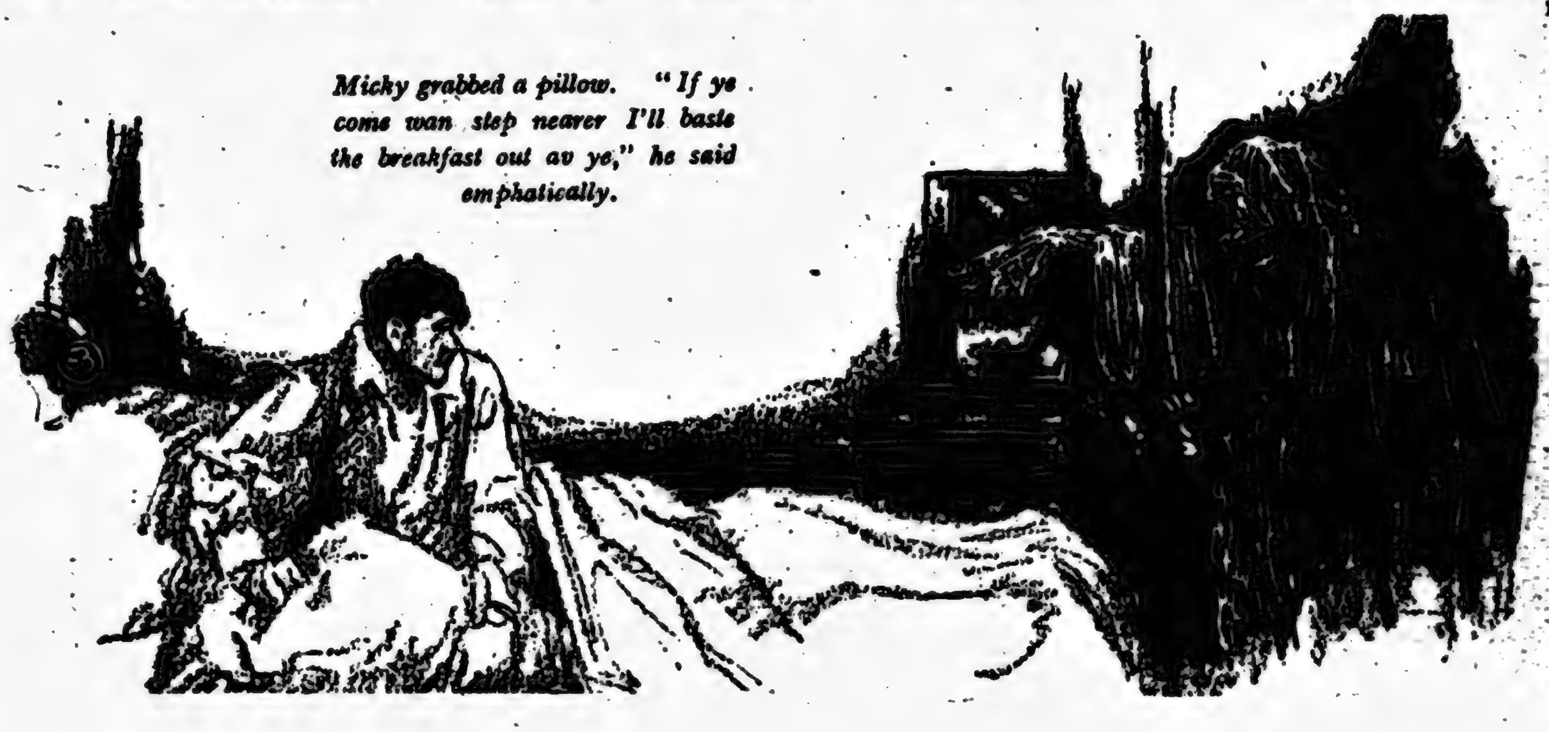
"I tell you I never left my room all night," snapped Harwood irritably.

"Howly Saints, preserve me soul!" gasped Micky, and slid to the floor in a crumpled heap.

"D'ye see that, landlord?" inquired Harwood, indicating the crumpled Micky.

"Yes, indeed, sir," assured the landlord, mystified.

"Then I think I may as well take those two fivers off you now—thank you very much."



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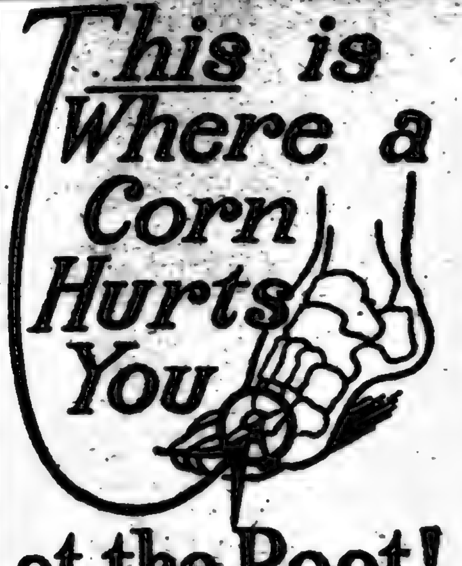
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at the Root!

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Perhaps you have invited blood poison by hacking the top of that corn with a razor, or burnt it off with caustic paste, liquids, or plasters, soaked it in hot water, picked dubiously at it with your finger-nails and sprinkled it with various powders to stop the aching. After doing all this and waiting patiently for results, you either find that most of the corn has stayed right on duty through it all, or else a brand new top has sprouted up to replace the old one, and the ache is still doing business at the old stand, worse than ever, and plus considerable extra soreness of raw skin around the corn. This is because you have only worried and irritated the top of the corn without at all affecting the little pointed part or core which is the real business end that causes all the pain by pressing on sensitive nerves. It would be as logical to cut the top off an aching tooth to stop the pain. It is only after all these time-wasting experiments with a corn, unpleasant as they are, that you are really ready to appreciate the marvellous way in which saltrated water acts and how totally different it is from anything else. It soon dissolves out the oil from dead, hardened, calloused, "corny" skin, leaving it soft and "mushy" as fresh putty, so that corns can easily be picked right out, root and all, whereas callouses turn white, curl up at the edges and come entirely off at one scrape with the dull edge of a knife. Sound healthy skin is not affected in any way by the water, excepting that it is wonderfully refreshing to sore, tired, tender, aching feet. To prepare the *medicated* water, which is also *oxygenated*, invest a few pence in a supply of the Reudel Bath Saltrates compound which is obtainable from any chemist, this being the registered name by which physicians and chiropodists prescribe it. Use about a tablespoonful to a gallon of rather hot water and rest the feet in this, but first bid all your foot misery a final farewell, for such tortures will soon be only unpleasant memories of the past.

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SPECIAL NOTE.—We are informed by Saltrates, Ltd. (Dept. 246B), Euston Buildings, London, N.W.1, who prepare a very high grade of Alkia Saltrates, that during the next ten days they are willing as an advertising offer, to supply anyone interested in the product with a regular 1/9 size packet free if applicant cares to send six penny stamps for postage, packing, etc.

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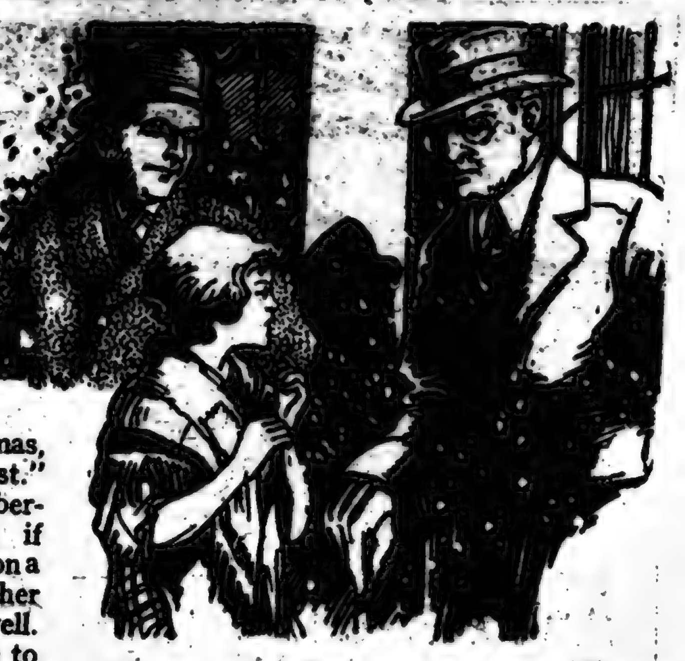
E. Hollingshead introduces the new Scrooge

CHRISTMAS ITSELF



MR. LEON THIBBLEWELL was a grouch—confirmed and definite; and the advent of the Christmas season but served to accentuate his grouchiness. "Happy Christmas, Mr. Thibblewell," was wearing him to shreds.

It was Christmas Eve and as he left his office in Leadenhall Street he adjured his clerk to lock up carefully.

"Very well, sir," responded Smithers. "Good-night, sir, and a Merry Christmas to you!"

"Dam-n-n!" rasped Leon Thibblewell. "Keep your wishes for those who want 'em." You will observe that Thibblewell was very Scrooge-like!

In the train at London Bridge, Thibblewell encountered a neighbour, Jackson.

"Merry Christmas, Thibblewell!" greeted Jackson.

"Dam-n!" said Thibblewell.

"What's that?" queried the other.

"I said 'Damn,' sir," responded his Scrooge-like neighbour.

"Why?" asked Jackson.

"Because I mean it!"

"What d'you mean it for?" persisted Jackson.

"Go to Hades," jerked Thibblewell.

"Go to Eltham!" Jackson responded angrily, baffled and perplexed. "Miserable old devil, that's what you are, Thibblewell. You don't like Christmas because it's expensive, I s'pose. Well, what if you don't? I only wished you a Merry Christmas—surely you don't mind that?"

"I don't want a Merry Christmas," grumbled Thibblewell. "Shut up, Jackson. Read your paper, do anything, but—don't talk to me about Christmas."

HE left the train at Eltham at war with the world. Oh, d—n it was snowing! He turned up his coat collar and plodded on towards his house sneering the while. What was all this rot about Christmas? What humbug it all was—Christmas cards with little overfed robins on them and snow and holly-berries and all that bunk! And when he reached home he'd find the place lumbered up with what were, idiotically, termed "goodies." Anybody 'ud think Christmas was a modern invention like the Jazz or Wireless to judge by the fuss people made about it. Bah! blithering rot, that's what it was. Why couldn't his days pursue their usual trend—*he* didn't want a break at Christmas time, his work was all he required. And this Christmas business stopped work. Rot! Bunkum! A nuisance! A silly fetish!

Turning the final corner for home he collided with a short man—a man very short of breath.

"Leon Thibble-Thibblewell! Just the fellow I want to see. But—a Merry Christmas, Leon, my boy. That, of course, comes first." Thibblewell decided to go carefully. Wilberforce was a business associate and, if Wilberforce wanted to see him then it was on a business matter. And business with the other man invariably meant money for Thibblewell.

Thibblewell extended his hand. "Same to you," he said, wincing at the other's grip. And he added, in justice to his conscience: "Though I don't care much about Christmas and all the absurd notions that go with it."

"You miserable crow," retorted Wilberforce poking his companion in the ribs with a fat forefinger. "You miserable crow."

"Don't call me a miserable crow," snapped Thibblewell, forgetting the value of the other's good will.

"But" strove Wilberforce, "you are—you are a miserable crow. Aren't you now?"

"No, I'm not," thundered Thibblewell. "Dammit, I'm not. And I *won't* be called a miserable crow by you, Wilberforce."

"That's all right. Cummenavadrink!"

"I don't want a drink!"

"Cummenavadrink," Wilberforce persisted.

Thibblewell shouted at the top of his voice: "I—don't—want—a drink!"

"Thibblewell, it's Christmas, y'know. Must have a drink. Usual thing. Spot of . . ."

"I don't want any spots," interrupted Thibblewell. "And I'm getting covered with snow standing here." He felt suddenly alarmed. Wilberforce had said that he wanted to see him. He mustn't upset him. Perhaps, well—he might be bringing business to Thibblewell, and . . .

"Come into the house, Wilberforce," he said.

"Good idea. Have a spot in the house. Christmas y'know, Leon, old boy. Merry Christmas to you!"

"Same to you, Wilberforce," Thibblewell responded reluctantly.

"Trust me for that," chirruped the other. He went on: "I say, you *are* a miserable crow, Leon." He leaned on Thibblewell's gate and grinned vacuously.

"Look here," said Thibblewell, forgetting everything, "if you call me a crow again I'll—I'll roll you in the snow. I'm not a crow and I hate Christmas. Put that in your pipe and smoke it!"

"Don't want to smoke," retaliated Wilberforce. "Want a drink. It's Christmas, Leon, old feller. And," a light of dawning wit shone in his eyes—"you're Christmas itself, Leon!"

Thibblewell was tempted to swear. "You're beastly irritating, Wilberforce, that's what you are," he said.

"You're Christmas itself," murmured Wilberforce sleepily.

"I'm *not* Father Christmas," shouted Thibblewell.

"Don't get angry, Leon," burbled Wilberforce, supporting himself on the rail of the gate. "Didn't say you were Father Christmas. Said you're Christmas itself!"

At that moment a little figure that had been standing unobserved in the porch of Thibblewell's doorway ventured forth timidly and with step that showed fear in its cat-like tread.

THIBBLEWELL, his attention momentarily distracted from the goading Wilberforce, turned at the sound of the timid feet and beheld a wisp of a girl—in rags.

"What are you doing here?" he asked in angry tone.

"Pl-please, I just come to sing a carol, sir; just startin' sir, w'en you come along, sir."

"Well?" demanded Thibblewell, glowering down on her with stern gaze.

"I'm a-goin', sir," came the quavering reply.

"Go quickly, then," he said.

"Stay," he added, as the little figure made to pass him. "You—you look very cold."

"I am, sir, very cold and 'ungry. See," she went on, in explanation, "Mum's out o' work; 'as been for weeks and there ain't anythink at 'ome to eat. Never is much at the best o' times."

"How old are you?" asked Thibblewell.

"Twelve, sir," answered the waif.

"My God!" ejaculated Thibblewell.

"'Tis terrible, Leon," put in Wilberforce. "Christmas time and good things and—everything, and this mite cold—cold—and—hungry. Terrible."

Thibblewell became electric. "Give me your name and address," he said to the girl. "I'll be coming along to see your mother in about an hour's time. Slip along home now and wait for me. You and your mother and the rest of the family if there's any more—by the way, what about your father?"

She shook her head. "Ain't got a father, sir—there's only Mum and me."

"Terrible!" he ejaculated. "Well, you're going to have a real Christmas this year," he added. "Run along home—tell your mother an hour from now."

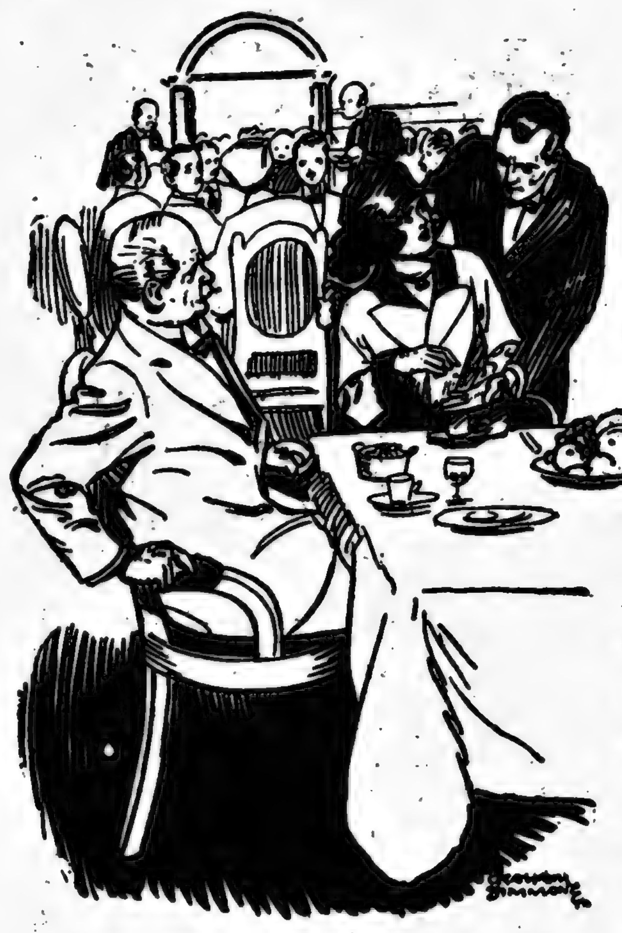
He watched the retreating figure of the waif as she hurried away on ill-shod feet and then he turned to Wilberforce.

"Leon," quavered that worthy, "you *are* Christmas itself, old boy."

"What do you mean?" asked Thibblewell.

The other grinned cheerily. "Your Christian name, old boy—spelt backwards!"

Edgar Wallace explains how "Killer Kay" settled Sir John's Xmas Day



"Excuse me." A hand came under hers and the tablet dropped into a thin brown palm.

"CHRISTMAS Day, hum—? Wonder where we shall spend it?" It was a favourite question of that irascible man. He would ask it in midsummer, in spring, when the memory of the last Christmas was scarcely forgotten. It was his mechanism of speech.

Once he asked it of Killer Kay.

* * *

When the Eastbourne Express pulled out of Victoria Station on a grey afternoon in December, Mary Boyd had neither eyes for the snowy beauties of the Sussex landscape, through which the train was presently flying, nor for the pale sunshine that awaited her when she was clear of the city's murk, nor yet for the other occupant of the carriage in which she sat. For the greater part of an hour he was so immersed in the study of newspapers that he also seemed oblivious to her presence.

The express was shrieking through Three Bridges when, looking up, she caught his eyes fixed on her. A lanky, lean-faced man of forty, his hair grey at the temples, but for the rest a deep brown brushed back from his forehead, he had the appearance of a successful professional man. He was dressed with finicking care, his morning coat fitted perfectly, his dark trousers were carefully creased, and the silk hat on the seat by his side was polished so that it shone. In that one glance, she took him in, from the pearl pin in his cravat to the shiny point of his enamelled shoes. And there her interest might have ended if those deep-set eyes of his had not held hers in fascinated bondage.

ONLY for a second and then, flushing, she turned her gaze to the white countryside which was running swiftly past.

"Aren't you Miss Boyd?"

His voice was remarkably deep and rich and in it was an indefinable quality of sympathy.

She turned her eyes again in his direction; surprise, suspicion, resentment at this intrusion into her sorrow, manifested in that one glance.

"Yes, I am Miss Boyd," she said quietly, and wondered if she had ever met him. It was hardly likely, for his was a face which she would not have forgotten.

"I am Dr. Kay of the Home Office," he introduced himself, and she was puzzled. Dr. Kay? She remembered something about him. Frank must have spoken of him.

"I did not wait for the end of the inquest," he went on. "I was trying to find the verdict in the last editions. I suppose it was . . . ?"

She nodded, her lips compressed, her eyes filled with unshed tears. Bertram Boyd had not been an ideal father. His pitiful weakness had estranged him from his family and had brought his wife to a premature end. Yet there were memories of him that Mary treasured. She remembered him before his love of the bottle had mastered him; a jolly, good-natured man who had carried her on his shoulder through the garden of Ashcome House. So that was how this stranger had seen her,; in that dismal court where twelve bored tradesmen had adjudicated upon the method by which Colonel Bertram Boyd had ended his life. They might well regard it as a waste of time, since Boyd had been found one morning by a horrified kitchen-maid, with his head in a gas oven and all the taps turned on. And this in the town house of Sir John Thorley, his brother-in-law.

"I WAS in court," said the lean-faced man. "I wonder—I realise it must pain you to speak of these things even to a doctor—but I wonder if you can tell me whether your father had shown any suicidal tendencies before?"

She hesitated, loth, as he knew, to talk about the hideous tragedy which clouded her life. And yet those eyes of his were very compelling, as they were kind. He looked like a man who felt intensely, though it was hardly likely, she told herself, that a doctor of experience should feel things very deeply.

"Yes, sometimes—he used to drink a great deal, and lately, since my aunt's death—Lady Thorley, you know—he had been very depressed. Uncle John took him to town, thinking that a change of scene and new interests might brighten him, but I don't think that his new life had any effect. I had a letter from Sir John only a day before—before this dreadful thing happened, saying that poor father had been strange in his manner."

"But," persisted the other, "did your father ever say to you 'I am tired of life' or anything of that kind?"

She shook her head.

"No. But he has said it to Uncle John—it came out in the evidence."

Dr. Kay was silent. He sat hunched up in a corner of the compartment, a heavy frown on his face, his lips pursed, his eyes fixed on the carpeted floor.

"I WISH I had stayed, but unfortunately I had an appointment. Was anything found in your father's room?"

Again she seemed disinclined to answer.

"Two whisky bottles—one empty, the other nearly empty," she said.

"Was he dressed when he was found?"

She nodded.

"Fully dressed, except he was in his stockinged feet. He had put on his slippers earlier in the evening—Sir John's valet in his evidence said that when he went into the room the last thing that night, he was sitting in his slippers."

"Can you tell me what kind of slippers he wore?"

Her gesture of distaste was not lost on the questioner.

"They were bathroom slippers—the kind without backs that you slip your feet into—I am awfully sorry if I seem rude, Dr. Kay, but I really wish not to discuss this matter."

He nodded gravely.

"I understand that, Miss Boyd. Will you please believe that I am not asking out of idle curiosity? Nevertheless, I am being unpardonably cruel, for I could discover all these things without questioning you. I had met your aunt, by the way, she was always an invalid, and if I remember aright she died of scarlet fever. There was some story of a burglar having frightened her. Do you live in Eastbourne?"

HER father had a house there, she told him, and he went on to talk enthusiastically of Sussex. He was a Sussex man and to him there was no other county in the world. He once had a cottage on the downs, but a wandering Zeppelin making for Portsmouth had dropped a bomb, which had left a large hole filled with splinters of furniture where the cottage had been.

"You have built another, doctor?"

He shook his head.

"No, I am going to Eastbourne on business," he said, and did not enlarge upon the object of his visit.

Frank Hallwell was waiting for her at the

(*Continued on page* 43.)

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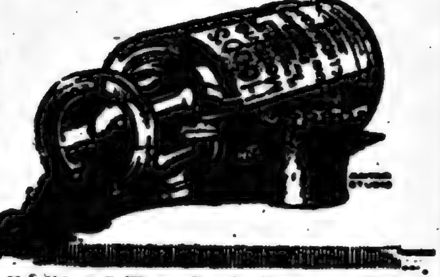

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B 20

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station, a tall athletic figure that was good to look upon. In the excitement of meeting him she did not say good-bye to her travelling companion.

"I was a beast to let you go up alone, darling," said the young man as he tucked her arm in his. "I should have taken no notice of your commands. Thank God it is all over."

She heaved a quick sigh.

"Don't let us talk about it," she said, and then saw a tall hat shining above the press of passengers at the barriers.

"Do you know him?" she asked. "The man in the silk hat—he travelled down with me."

Frank Hallwell followed the direction of her eyes.

"Good lord!" he said. "It is Killer Kay!"

"Killer Kay!" she said, puzzled. "I know his name is Kay, but why 'Killer'?"

Frank was a rising lawyer in the Public Prosecutor's office and was an authority upon her travelling companion.

"They call him "Killer" at the Home Secretary's office because he has sent more men to the gallows than any three men in this country. There isn't a criminal in England who doesn't know him by name, for he is one of the greatest crime experts the world has known. Lombrose and Mantazana were kindergarten pupils compared with Killer."

She shivered.

"I suppose he is down here in connection with that beach murder that everybody is talking about," he went on enthusiastically. "I wish I had seen him, I would have introduced you."

"Frank, please."

He was instantly penitent.

FRANK HALLWELL lived with his father in a house adjoining the three-acre estate of the late Colonel Boyd.

He had spent the evening with the girl, the second night after her return, and was drinking a night-cap preparatory to turning in when there was announced the man for whom he had devoted two days of fruitless search.

"This is a pleasant surprise, doctor," he said, helping the visitor to divest himself of his shining oilskins, for half a gale was blowing up the channel and the snow was banking against the curtained windows. "I knew that you were here and I've been looking for you. You travelled down with Miss Boyd, to whom, by the way, I am engaged."

Killer Kay had a smile of infinite sweetness. "Had I known that you were Miss Boyd's fiancé, I should have looked you up two nights ago, Hallwell. I only learnt that fact to-night."

He preceded the young man into his snug study, chose a cigar from the open box with the greatest deliberation, and sank with a little sigh of comfort into a big armchair.

"She died accidentally," he said. "I have been experimenting——"

"She—who?" asked the startled Frank.

"The girl on the beach—I'm sorry," Kay smiled again at the alarm he had caused. "The local police were satisfied that the girl was murdered. The man in custody swears that the stone fell from the cliff above. Nobody has ever seen stones fall from the cliff, but they do fall at night. I was nearly killed an hour ago by one. They were lovers and had found what they thought was a cosy and sheltered spot under the cliff. It is a death trap, and if nobody has seen the stones that come down, it is because the cliff chooses the dark hours for its eccentric shedding of rock."

"He is innocent?"

"Undoubtedly. I have examined the body—however, that was not what I intended talking about. How is Sir John?"

"Thorley? Did they tell you he was down? Yes, he came this afternoon. Poor chap, he is terribly upset about the whole affair."

Dr. Kay pulled at his cigar, his eyes half-closed, a picture of content.

"I wonder if I could meet him," he asked at last. "I have an idea that he may throw some light upon a very peculiar circumstance attending Boyd's death—his valet would do as well, of course, but I prefer tapping the stream at the source."

"That is easy. He is staying over for a day or so to settle the colonel's estate. Sir John is being very decent about it all and has advanced poor Mary a thousand to carry on until the estate is administered . . . rich? I think he is very rich. He has a big house in town, an estate in Worcestershire, and a villa at Mentone. He carries very large sums about with him, which isn't very wise. For example, he paid Mary in notes."

Killer Kay was sitting upright, his eyes blazing.

"Notes, eh? Fine!"

"I don't see anything 'fine' about paying in bank-notes, doctor," smiled Frank.

"You don't, eh? Well—anyway we shall see."

Next night he strolled up the long avenue to the Boyds' house, and before he was announced Mary Boyd came out into the hall to meet him.

"I had no idea I was travelling with such a celebrity, doctor," she said with a faint smile. "I have not told my uncle about your—your profession. He is rather worried just now and I thought it might——"

"Exactly, Miss Boyd," Killer Kay smiled. "You are very wise. I suppose you have been very busy?" She nodded. "Signing things, eh? With witnesses?"

She nodded again.

"Uncle John hates lawyers; my own is coming to-morrow, but there were one or two things that concerned poor daddy and which we felt for the sake of his memory we ought to keep in the family—I don't know why I tell you this," she added almost sharply and laughed.

He had thought she was pretty in the train; he saw now that she was beautiful.

"Before we go in will you do me a favour?"

Her eyebrows rose.

"Why, surely—if I can."

"Will you promise me that the next time you come to London you will wire me the train by which you are travelling?"

She stared.

"But how—why?"

"Will you? You promised you would, if you could."

"I will, if it pleases you, but——"

"But me no buts," he said good-humouredly and followed her into the drawing-room.

SIR JOHN THORLEY was a stout red-faced man with white moustache and heavy white eyebrows. He looked to be a peppery colonel who had served many years in India, and his manner was so irascible as to support this view of him.

"Glad to meet you, doctor," he snapped. "Glad to meet you. Friend of young Hallwell, hum."

He generally added a doubtful "hum" after any phrase which might be construed into a compliment. It was as though he thought he had gone too far or had offered a larger meed of affability than the object deserved. Very soon he ignored the doctor altogether and addressed himself solely to the girl.

"It is a big house for a young gal to run," he said, shaking his head. "You'd do better, my dear, if you took a flat in town and put up at an hotel here. I simply can't ask you to stay at my house—simply can't after—well, you understand. But you mustn't stay here alone in this big house. Can't spend Christmas Day here."

"Why not, Uncle John?" she asked, amused for a second (it struck Dr. Kay that she was incapable of being amused for longer in her present frame of mind).

"Why not? My dear good gal, I should be sick with fright. First your dear aunt, then your dear father. No, no, I can't stand it. I must have you where I can see you, hum. After my burglar, my dear—no solitude. He killed your poor dear aunt, the blackguard. Gave her a fright, probably infected the house with the beastly scarlet fever that carried her off."

Mary went out of the room a little while later and Dr. Kay seized the opportunity.

"Sir John, where were Colonel Boyd's slippers found?"

Sir John blinked at him.

"Where were—don't know what you mean, sir. Boyd's slippers? In his room, sir. Where the devil could they be found?"

"They might have been on his feet," said the Killer gently. "I gather they were soft slippers. I wonder why he took them off?"

"Huh? Never thought of that. Anyway, he was mad. I haven't told her, but he was stark staring mad. Been drinking heavily. Terrible. Couldn't stop him. Very sad."

He shook his big head, and just then the girl came back and the conversation was changed.

THE next morning Killer Kay went to London and spent the day pursuing certain enquiries. In the afternoon he left by the Western Express, carrying with him a Home Office order.

He spent the night in Plymouth and the next morning a hired car carried him to Princetown on the Moors.

A circle of men slouched round a stone-flagged circle. Between each was a space of four feet. Mostly they kept their eyes fixed on the ground, for there was little or nothing for them to see. One of the sides of the quadrilateral in which they exercised was a high wall of grey stone; another was formed by the end of the ugly chapel, covered with black pitch to ensure the hundred-years-old brickwork from decay. A third side was formed by a companion wall, and the fourth by the stub "B" ward with its yellow grille-protected door.

At three points outside of the circle stood uniformed men, silent, watchful, suspicious. They carried no weapons, but drooping from the side-pocket of one was the worn leather strap of a truncheon. The circle moved at an even pace, brown-faced, unshaven men in shabby yellow, their legs encased in buttoned gaiters, their blue and white striped shirts open at their red throats. Perched on each head was a nondescript black cap ornamented with letters of the alphabet, crudely embroidered. Tramp, tramp, tramp, their heavy boots crashed on the stone walk.

"Stop talking there!"

A sharp order from one of the watchful officers, every untidy face a picture of blank innocence.

"Halt!"

Those facing in the right direction saw the cause of the order. The deputy governor had come round the corner of the prison chapel, and convicts must not move when the governor or his deputy are approaching.

"Thirty men; exercise party; all correct, sir."

The senior warder saluted stiffly.

But it was not the sight of the young deputy in his stained trench coat that generated that electric thrill which ran through the thirty hidden men of Dartmoor. It was his companion.

"*Killer!*"

THE word was hissed from man to man for the benefit of those who might not turn their heads.

They knew him by repute for the most part; some had personal acquaintance with the Home Office expert, whose word had sent so many cruel men to the trap.

He stood watching that motionless circle of misery, fingering his chin with a white hand, a look of gloom and doubt upon his face.

"That is Ridgeman—the fellow who is nearest the warder," said the deputy, no less intrigued by the unexpected presence of the Killer than any of the men who stood stiffly to attention.

"Yes, I will talk to him."

The deputy beckoned forward the officer in charge.

"367, bring him to Dr. Kay."

The doctor strolled away from the group, making his way to an open space near the further wall.

Presently came 367, a little white of face, a little unsteady of hand. He was a small man, grey at the temples.

Dr. Kay nodded to the warder and the man stood back.

"Ridgeman, do you remember breaking into 408, Lowndes Square?"

"Yes, sir. That's what I got my lagging for."

"I know, I know. But do you remember all the particulars of your burglary? You got into the place through the window of the housekeeper's room, didn't you?"

"Yes, sir. The room was empty because the housekeeper was on a visit to the country. Her door was locked, I had to open it with a skeleton."

THE Killer gave a sigh of relief and his eyes sparkled.

"That is what I want to know. The door was locked, eh, nothing valuable in the room, eh? Just an ordinary housekeeper's room, with a few nicknacks I suppose, a picture or two, photographs of the housekeeper's relations?"

Ridgeman, wondering, nodded.

"Nothing else?" The doctor eyed him keenly.

"There was a parcel in red paper——"

"Not on the bed?" the question was shot at the man so sharply that he stepped back as though he were dodging a blow.

"There was a sort of white dressing-gown—no not a dressing-gown, more like a painter's overall."

"And gloves, eh?" Kay's saturnine face was eager.

"Why, yes, sir. There were a pair of old gloves sticking out of the pocket of the overall."

The Killer rubbed his hands joyously, his thin lips were curled in a smile.

"The only place they *could* be—in the housekeeper's room, Ridgeman—the only place. Now tell me this. Was there any kind of label on the parcel? Did it look as though it had been carefully packed as it would be if it came from a store or shop? Or was it rough-tied, as you or I might tie it?"

Ridgeman nodded.

"No, sir. It was nicely tied, but the label had been scratched off. I didn't open it. I was out for jewellery. Lady Thorley had a lot. It's a lie what they said at the trial that I frightened her to death. I didn't go into her room because I knew she was ill and had a nurse, and, besides, all the stuff was kept in a safe in the library. I was working on the safe when Sir John caught me. I was a fool to bash him. I should have got away with twelve months instead of seven years if I hadn't. But it's a lie to say I had anything to do with the lady's death. I never knew she was dead until I came up for trial."

"Thank you, Ridgeman," Kay nodded. "You may not serve your full time."

RIDGEMAN went back to the circle, and deputy and expert strolled up the slope and into the prison offices.

"Did you find what you wanted to find?" asked the deputy.

"Yes. How many murders are there committed in England in the course of a year?"

The other looked at him astonished.

"LISTEN IN" TO THIS

Girls, a word in your ear; just a little friendly word, because last Christmas there was a girl who said:—

"Give me a successful business man for a husband."
And she married a poet.

"All I care about is intellect."
She married a prizefighter.

"I shall never marry a man who smokes about the house."
Her husband transferred his affections to his pipe.

"If a man is just and honest, it is all I ask."
She married a lawyer.

"After all, money isn't the only thing."
She married a money-bag.

"These bookish men are such awful bores."
She married a librarian.

"I shall never, never marry."
She is drawing alimony.

"My heart's desire is a man whose ideals are steadfast, changeless."
She married a politician.

"When I marry, my certificate will be divorce-proof."
She is now married to her third actor husband.

"I loathe these big brainy men who know everything and have a masterful way with them and are awfully handsome. I shall marry a simpleton."

She married me. And, girls, I'm just wondering if she was the only right one in the whole crowd.

"Fifty?" he suggested.

The Killer smiled.

"Fifty are brought to the bar of judgment. I should say that the number is between four hundred and five hundred. It is difficult to estimate. You only hear of the bunglers, the men and women who do their victims to death by violence. The crimes of passion committed by muddle-headed people who invite detection. 'A' uses poison and is found with the poison in his possession, and there is always a chemist in the neighbourhood to prove the sale. Generally 'A' says he wanted to poison mice or kill a dog. 'B' butchers his wife (because he loves another woman) and throws her down a well. 'C' lays wait for his enemy (everybody knows of the enmity) and shoots him. 'D' has a quarrel with his girl and kills her. If he doesn't commit the crime in the presence of witnesses, he advertises his guilt by running away. 'E' is a woman who adopts babies for a certain sum and destroys them. And so on. Examine the mentality of these people. Ninety per cent. of them are ignorant, almost illiterate. The great histories of crime that might guide them are closed to them. They must slay in their own primitive ways. But since the instinct for murder is not confined to the low-minded, it follows that there are other methods employed, methods which successfully defy detection. I never see a respectable funeral cortège processing through the street but I wonder in which of the mourning coaches the murderer is riding."

HIS voice was earnest, so earnest that the deputy governor stifled the laugh that was on its way.

"You suggest that murder is practised as a fine art?" he asked.

"Murder *is* a fine art," said the Killer thoughtfully, "and it is so easy! Popular education has brought to the millions a knowledge of science which enables the evil-minded to dispense with poison and axe. It has given them weapons undreamt of by their grandfathers—a knowledge of micro-organisms that destroy as surely as a bullet; of natural forces that can be employed to cut soul from body more swiftly than the knife or guillotine. Do you imagine that they are not using their knowledge? Of course they are. A man who knows that finger prints are fatal leaves no finger prints. A poisoner who knows that arsenic or any other metallic poison endures for years in the body of his victim uses a vegetable poison. The fellow anxious to rid himself of an obnoxious partner contrives it in such a way that he receives most of the condolences."

The deputy governor smiled again.

"I shouldn't like to come into your view as a murderer, however clever I was," he said.

"Don't," replied Kay grimly. "They call me 'Killer.' I am proud of the name. I'd rather kill bad men than found an orphanage. I find joy in the chase! When the drop falls and the hunt is ended I'm like a man that is lost."

The deputy walked with him through the immense iron grille that guards the entrance of the prison, and watched his car until it was out of sight.

"The pity is," he said to the governor afterwards, "that most of the Killer's most interesting victims never get as far as Dartmoor."

Dr Kay had two calls to make on his

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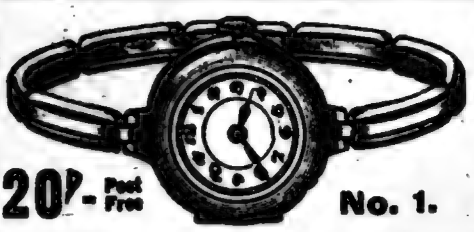

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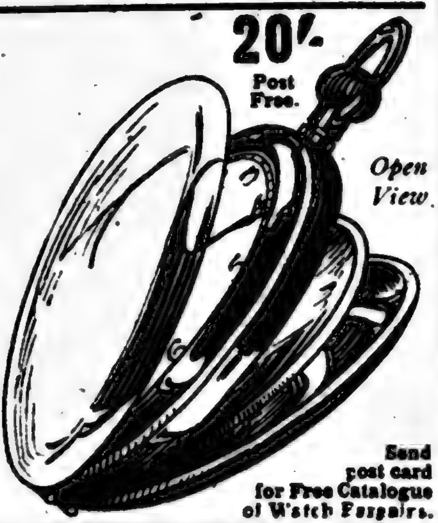

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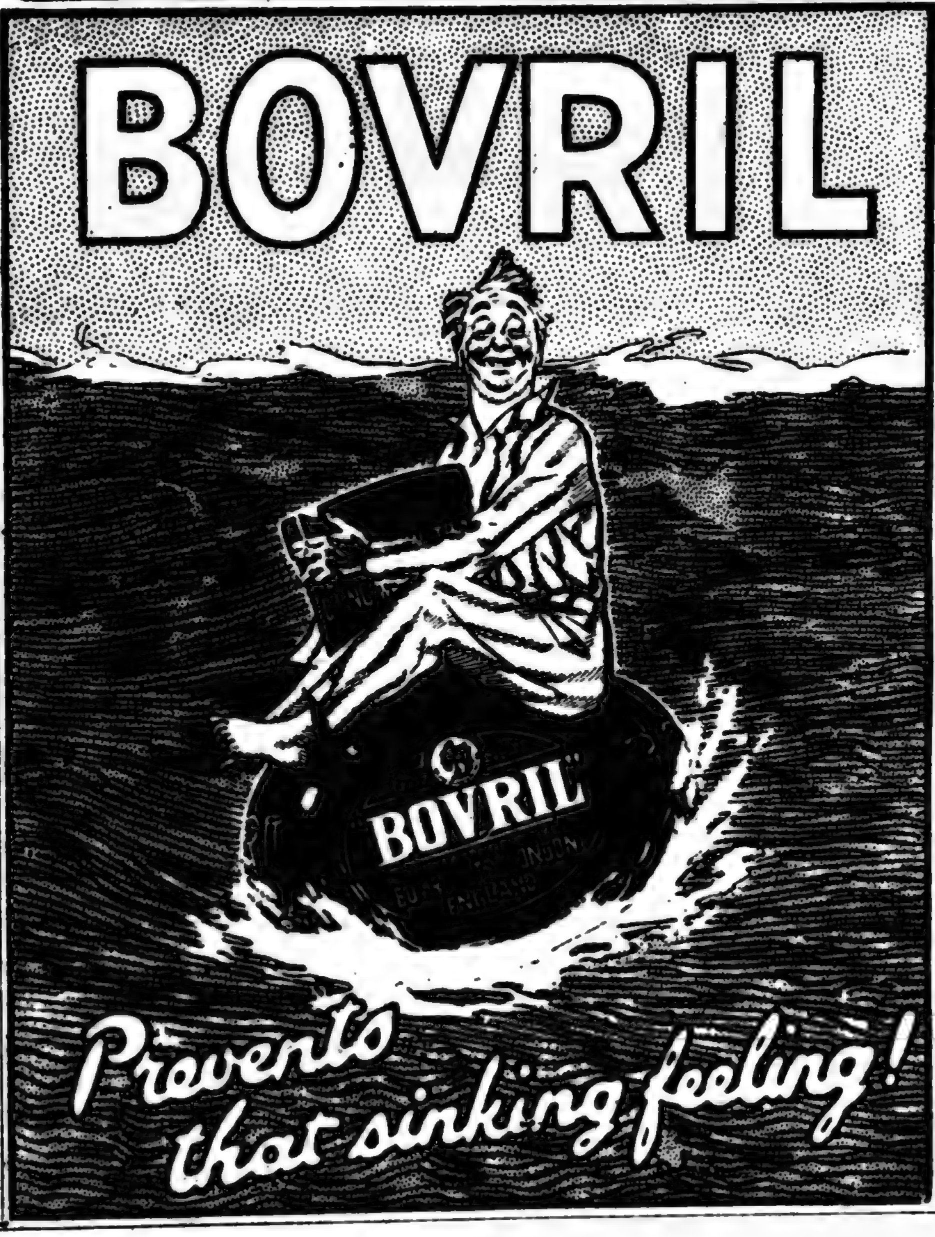

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"Westo" Army Trench Coats

are now being supplied
IN ADMIRALTY BLUE.

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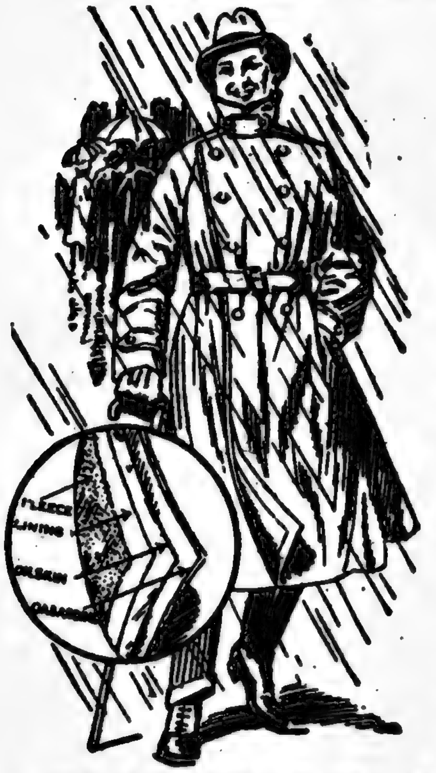

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This is a cut price to popularise this coat with the Public. It will shortly have to be increased owing to the steady rise in textiles, and the increasing cost of dyeing. THEREFORE ORDER NOW.

Brand New, Tripleproof Gaberdine, check lining, **oilskin *inter-lining*,** and with detachable **All-Woollen** fleece lining. **Four Coats in one.**

These Coats are impervious to weather. Worn with the fleece lining, they combine the **warmth and comfort of an ulster** with the rain resisting qualities of a stout mackintosh. With this lining detached they are a **light, elegant raincoat.** Thousands testify to their worth. They will last for years.

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made from Government material for the use of Army Officers.

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Chest sizes, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 ins. When ordering state height and chest measurement over waistcoat, and whether required in Admiralty Blue or Khaki.

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We are the Originators of Trench Coats for Civilian Wear, and if quality be considered (and of course this is the main factor) our coats are easily the cheapest on the Market. We supply direct "**From the Warehouse to the Wearer.**" We have no fabulous rents to pay and the Public get the benefit. If possible call at our capacious Warehouse at Hounslow and make your own selection.

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We stock a large variety of Overcoats from **25s.** to **£5 5s.** Youths' Double-breasted Chester Overcoats **19s.** Save money by coming direct to the Wholesaler—quite half shop prices.

Cheques, Money Orders and Postal Orders should be crossed Barclay's Bank, Limited, Treasury Notes should be registered.

GEORGE WESTON & CO.

Clothing Contractors, "Moneyback" Merchants,

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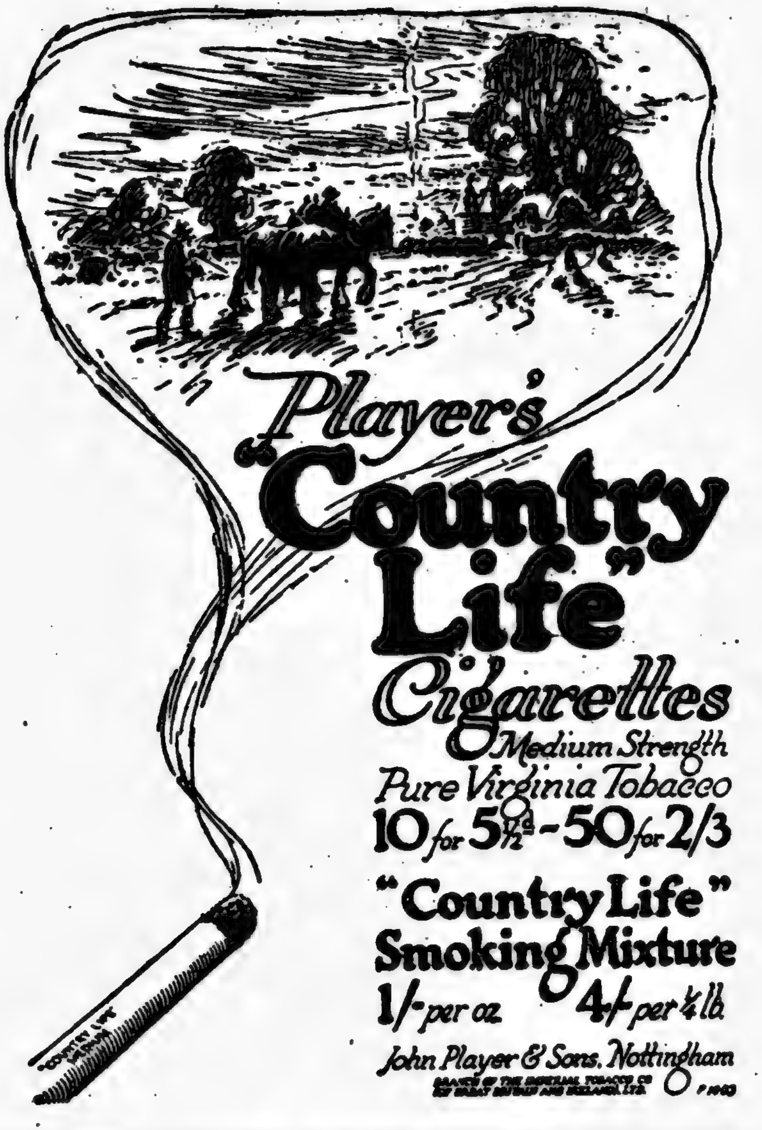

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practically a whole day waiting your turn at a hospital when for 1/3 you can purchase a box of

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By Dr. G. COURTENAY BEALE

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deals in plain non-technical language and comprehensive authoritative manner with the whole subject, from the "Why" of it and the many years of preparation, to the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood, and the actual mental and physical difficulties which beset the partners at different periods of their lives together.

It is a wonderful book, a necessary book, alike for the married and those contemplating marriage, and all who have profited by the understanding wisdom of "WISE WEDLOCK" will want to secure at once this further treatise by the same distinguished author.

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19-21, Ludgate Hill, LONDON, E.C.4

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return to London. He went to Somerset House and made a search of certain files; then he called at a laundry, and what he learnt at these two places seemed to satisfy him, for he spent the rest of the day in his laboratory perfecting his new test for the discovery of arsenic in solution.

IT was nearly a week after her uncle's departure that Mary Boyd received a letter from him asking her to lunch with him at a club which had both a man and woman membership. The day he chose was Christmas Eve—an excellent day for a visit to town. Mary Boyd looked forward to the trip.

Half-way to London she remembered that she had not kept her promise to Dr. Kay. She missed her uncle on the Victoria platform and was wandering about the broad spaces of the platform when she saw the telegraph office. Should she wire? She hesitated. It seemed so silly a thing to do; besides, she was in town now and she had only promised that she would wire him before she left Eastbourne telling him the time she would arrive. And she was here already.

She half turned to walk away when with sudden resolution she entered the office and scribbled on a form:

"Am in town, lunching at the Regal Club."

She had no sooner sent the wire than she regretted her act, and regretted it all the more when, walking from the office, she came face to face with the ruddy-faced Sir John.

"Hello, here you are then—missed you. Whom have you been wiring to, my dear?"

"To—to the housekeeper, to tell her what time I shall be back."

She hated herself for lying, but she could not tell him the truth. It felt foolish, it would have sounded imbecile.

"Seen your lawyer, eh? Didn't tell him about your poor father's youthful escapade?"

She shook her head.

The car was passing along Whitehall and she wondered in which of those gloomy buildings Killer Kay had his office.

"Boys will be boys," said Sir John gruffly, "and if your father had an affair in his youth it is not for us to tell the prying, spying lawyers all about it—huh?"

SHE was not in the mood to discuss her father's early follies. It was sufficient that she had signied the deed which would provide for the woman concerned. She had had an unpleasant five minutes when she had learnt that the document had to be witnessed by her servants, but Sir John had assured her that it was not necessary that the deed should be read—even she had not read it again after she had perused the draft.

"Here we are," he said, and helped her out of the car as it stopped before the palatial entrance of the Regal. It was a bitterly cold day, with a threat of snow in the leaden skies, but it was not the cold that made her shiver

The lunch was well ordered, for Sir John Thorley was something of an epicure.

They lingered over the dessert, and when the coffee came—

"Don't use sugar—makes you fat," growled Sir John.

She smiled indulgently as he pushed a saccharine tablet along the tablecloth.

"Thank you, Uncle John," she said, "I'm hardly likely to get fat, but——"

She held the tablet between her finger and thumb above the coffee. Another fraction of a second and it would have dropped.

"Excuse me."

A hand came under hers and the tablet dropped into a thin brown palm.

She turned, startled, to meet the smiling eyes of Killer Kay.

"Will you go over and see Frank Hallwell? He is sitting at the table in the window," he said smoothly.

"What the devil is the meaning of this, sir?" stormed Sir John, growing purple.

But Killer Kay did not speak until, with a frightened glance at the two men, Mary left them alone.

"It saves a lot of unpleasantness to have the tablet," said Dr. Kay in his suavest voice. "Otherwise it means getting a bottle for the coffee and attracting everybody's attention."

"Will you—please tell me?" Sir John's voice was husky.

"Come with me."

THE words were a command and Sir John followed the doctor meekly.

In the vestibule of the club two men were sitting as though they were waiting for somebody. They rose at the sight of Killer Kay and came towards him.

"Here is your man, inspector," said Kay brusquely. "I charge him with the wilful murder of Isabel Alice Thorley and further with the wilful murder of Bertram James Boyd."

CURSORY RHYMES

THE TEN LITTLE BUREAUCRATS

One little bureaucrat,
Such a lot to do,
Wanted someone else to blame—
Then there were two.

Two little bureaucrats,
Thirsting for some tea,
Couldn't pour it out themselves—
Then there were three.

Three little bureaucrats,
Squaring up the war,
Weren't content with dummy bridge—
Then there were four.

Four little bureaucrats,
Kicking and alive,
Found they had another chair—
Then there were five.

Five little bureaucrats,
In a proper fix,
Nobody to wind the clock—
Then there were six.

Six little bureaucrats,
Moving earth and heaven,
Grumbled they were kept till four—
Then there were seven.

Seven little bureaucrats,
Going such a rate,
Gave up work between their meals—
Then there were eight.

Eight little bureaucrats,
Working in a line;
One was made department chief—
Then there were nine.

Nine little bureaucrats,
Labouring with pen;
One's brother lost his job—
Then there were ten.

Ten little bureaucrats,
Slaving for their bread—
(Never mind the others now,
Ten's sufficient.—Ed.)

A. M.

* * *

"SO far from Thorley being a millionaire," explained Dr. Kay through his cigar, "he is a very poor man. He had lived unhappily with his wife, who was immensely wealthy and who, unknown to him, had made a will leaving all her property to her brother. Thorley is a governor of the Wormwood Fever Hospital, and it is the practice of that hospital to despatch to a special laundry any bed-clothes that have been in contact with patients suffering from malignant infectious diseases. These articles are packed in antiseptic red paper and are immediately put, paper and all, into a disinfecting tank before they are washed. Three days before Lady Thorley became infected he called at the hospital, and, as was his practice, stopped his little car, which he drove himself, under the open window of the room in which the infected linen was kept. He made a tour of the hospital without attendance, and it is known that he went into the soiled-linen room. After he had gone a parcel containing pillow slips was missing, though very little attention was given to the matter at the time. The parcel had been tossed into the car through the open window.

"Lady Thorley died of malignant scarlet fever. There is no doubt that Sir John in the absence of the nurse, for she was suffering from a nervous breakdown at the time, placed an infected pillow under her head. When he found that Boyd had the money, he killed Boyd. He allowed the colonel to get drunk, dragged him downstairs in the middle of the night and arranged a suicide. Unfortunately for him, Boyd was wearing loose slippers which fell off in the bedroom when he was lifted. They were found afterwards neatly arranged under his bed. Suicides aren't so tidy as all that."

"HAVE you analysed the saccharine tablet?" asked Frank in a hushed voice.

Killer Kay nodded.

"If your young friend had swallowed the coffee containing that tablet, she would have died this morning, and the doctors would have diagnosed the case without hesitation as one of acute ptomaine poisoning."

"But why did he want to kill her? The money would have gone to her cousin in Canada."

The Killer chuckled softly.

"She signed a will in Thorley's favour. She didn't know that it was a will. The draft he gave her made provisions for a mythical woman to whom Boyd was indebted. The document she signed and which was witnessed in her presence was a will. I think I shall hang Thorley, if he doesn't die of fright."

BUT Sir John Thorley was not hanged, nor did he die of fright. In searching him the jailer had overlooked a small grey pellet in his waistcoat pocket. Sir John found it in the middle of the night. On Christmas morning the jailer went to wake him . . .

John closes the Party with a farewell Deoch an' Doris

"Write to JOHN BULL about it"

IF you've got a grievance ; if you've got a grouse ;
If you want a servant, a husband or a house ;
If you've got the needle, if you've got the "flu,"
Don't be pessimistic for I'll tell you what to do :

Chorus :
Write to "John Bull" about it!
Don't wait a day without it.
If with life's afflictions you're sure you cannot cope,
If you are disgusted with the present price of soap ;
Just shove your little letter in your little envelope
And write to "John Bull" about it.

IF there's sleet in August and snowstorms in July,
If you hear a rumour that England's going dry ;
If your wife's relations have come to stay for good,
Or if the home-fires cannot burn for lack of coal and wood :

Chorus :
Write to "John Bull" about it!
Write it all down—don't shout it.
If beneath your troubles you fear you're going to sink,
If you're feeling black and blue instead of in the pink,
Fill your heart with hopefulness and your fountain pen with ink
And write to "John Bull" about it.

IF you're over-rated, also over-taxed,
If the rent-collector comes before he's "axed,"
If it seems a hardship making both ends meet,
If fat men trav'lling in the Tube *will* stand upon your feet :

Chorus :
Write to "John Bull" about it!
There's not a soul can flout it.
If your weekly wages are only worth a "song,"
If your pipe declines to light and everything goes wrong,
Or if your neighbour's gramophone plays "Peggy" all day long—
Write to "John Bull" about it!

IF you want the answer to questions by the score,
As "Why the postal rates are up" and "Why we won the War,"
If you want the details of politics or crime,
If you want to know where flies go in the winter time :

Chorus :
Write to "John Bull" about it!
You'll get the truth—don't doubt it.
If you want to know the quickest way to kill the next-door cat,
Or why poor Winston Churchill keeps on talking through his hat,
Or why we cannot buy our beer at eighteen pence a vat—
Write to "John Bull" about it!

A. G. GARDINER, Arnold Bennett, Rev. R. J. Campbell, D.D., Harold Owen, Will Dyson, Harrison Owen, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, Hesketh Pearson and Earl Haig are regular contributors to "John Bull," and in addition, since May 6th, 1922, the following men and women have contributed important articles to its columns :—Mr. Asquith, Lord Birkenhead, Mr. Walter Runciman, Sir Percy Scott, Mrs. H. A. L. Fisher, Earl Russell, Sir L. Worthington-Evans, Lord Lamborne, "A Gentleman with a Duster," Clemence Dane, J. M. Hogge, Lt.-Col. H. Page Croft, Major-Gen. Sir F. Maurice, T. P. O'Connor, Edgar Wallace, Rt. Hon. Sir William Bull, Sir Harry Lauder, Lt.-Commander the Hon. J. M. Kenworthy, Thomas Burke, Major Hon. C. Lowther, Duchess of Hamilton, Silas K. Hocking, Sir Harry Brittain, etc.

THESE are just a few of the people who have "written to JOHN BULL about it." Why don't you?

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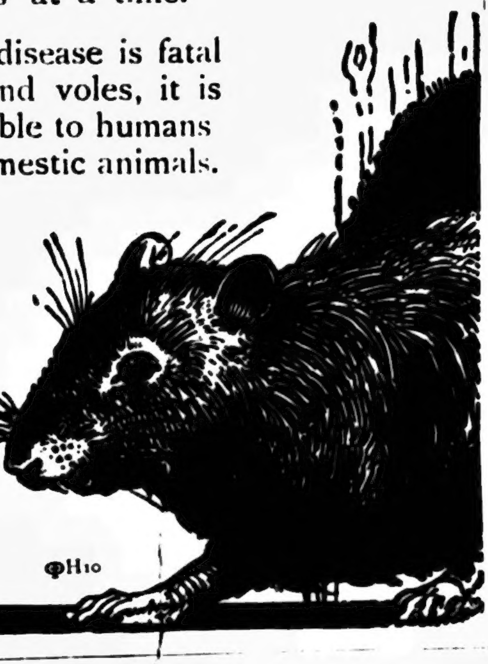

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he.
He called for his pipe, and he called for his glass,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

And every fiddler had a drink,
And a very fine drink had he,
For there's none so rare as can compare,
With O.V.H., you see.

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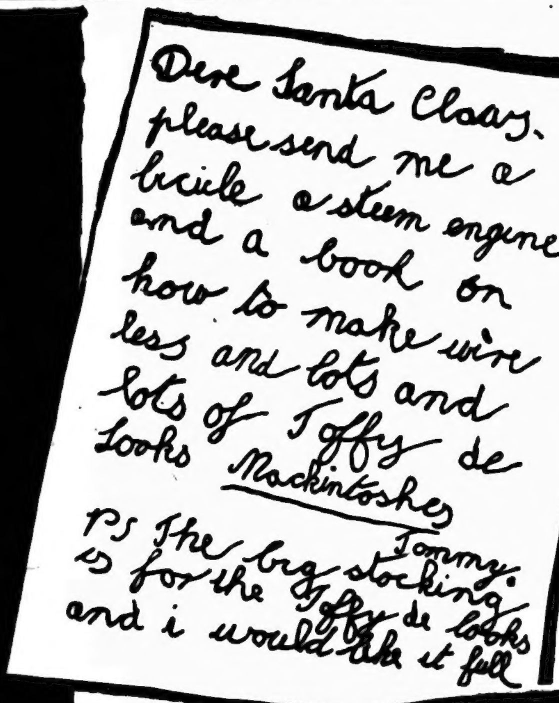

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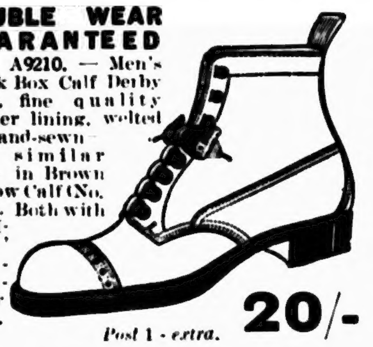

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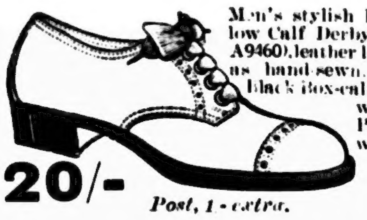

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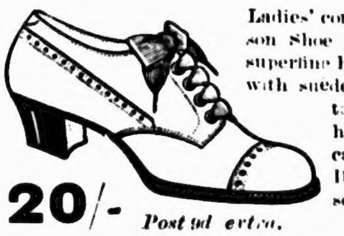

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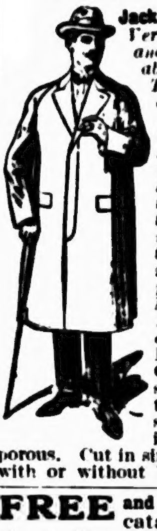

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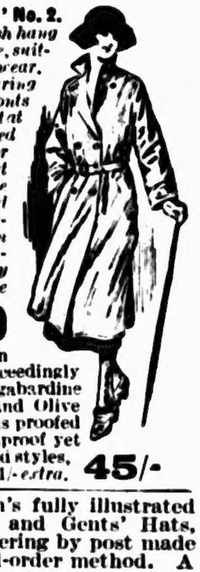

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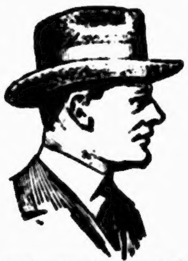

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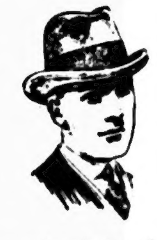

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